THE UNIVERSE'S BEST-SELLING SPECTRUM MAG!

YOUR SINCLAIR

The seriously Speccy magazine

£2.50 ISSUE 89 MAY 93 • WITH CUSTARDY FREE TAPE

DIAL HARD! Tune in to our new communications series!

IN YER FACE!



'Here, Wilmslow, turn off the blowlamp a minute. I get the feeling we're being watched.' 'Nonsense, Kippers. I especially chose this spot because we'd be masked by the YS Beaut Box. It features *Chaos* and *Music Synth 48K*, you know. Now lend a hand – we want to be in this mag by nightfall.' 'Not so fast, miscreant types. The newsagent's keeping the tape safe behind the counter. You're under arrest.' 'Curses! We'd have got away with it if it hadn't been for you meddling readers.'

Clown around with Playdays inside

CLOCK THIS!



Juggle your way to page 42

Enjoy a bit of the old ultraviolence with Space Gun • 4-Most Thrillers – it's a compilation! With four games! That are thrilling! (Blimey.) • Lean, green and a bit irritated actually – the Super Space Invaders rain death from the skies • Holy seasonal adjustments! Catch up with The Official Father Christmas • I, Ball 2 bounces back • Plus! Help Dr Who and Save Our Speccy! • And Spec Tec Jr hosts a trouble-shooting special • Chunky and funky! (But that's enough about Christopher Biggins.)

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CONTENT

Salutations, Spec-chums, and welcome to another gag-packed issue of YS, the funky skillo magazine with the classical hint of crapness. We've been poring over your questionnaires in order to make the mag even more to your liking. One thing that was stunningly obvious was that you want more techy stuff. Last month's Ooh, Sourcey! was just the first of a clutch of techy features, and this ish sees the introduction of number two – Dial Hard. Let us know what you think of it.

Gamesters shouldn't feel left out though. Not only does the covertape feature my (and a lot of other people's) fave game of all, *Chaos*, but it also has a dead snazzy reader game that blows most commercial shoot-'em-ups out of the fishpond (or something). Later on in the ish you can let Alternative know that releasing *Dr Who – Dalek Attack* would actually be a really smart idea – yup, the SOS campaign is back!

We've had an eventful month here in the Shed. As it's coming up to exam time, all the freelancers have been begging off reviewing games in order to get down to some serious revision. And, more worryingly, two of Bert the Stick Insect's legs have fallen off. Shed zoology expert Steve Anderson says they'll grow back again, so that's all right. I hope. Anyway, enough wibble – be off with you and read the magazine.

Happy trails,

Jonathan



NEWS WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

HAND-HELD SPECCY REVEALED!

As we were going to press, news reached us of a startling development in Speccy technology. A French firm, Poisson Industries, have been working on a hand-held Speccy for the last year. We spoke to company director Avril Poisson via the YS cross-channel phone link.

'Work started last April, and we've now reached the stage of having a working prototype ready to show the software houses. Shrinking the actual Speccy hardware wasn't much of a problem, as it's so small to begin with. The two biggest obstacles were the power pack and the screen. We've managed to solve the former by building-in a battery adapter – you just plug in an ordinary car battery and this gives up to twelve hours of play. The screen's been rather more of a problem, but we think our revolutionary new TV harness will enable full hands-off display appreciation.'

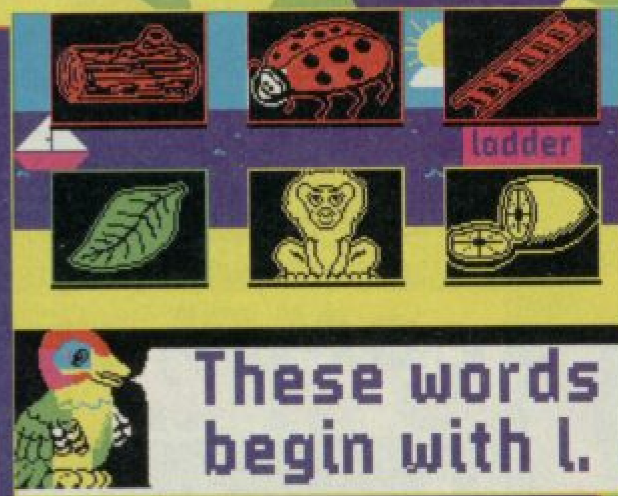
Poisson Industries won't be taking any orders until the hardware is finalised, but rest assured that YS will be first with the news on this unbelievable new machine.

NEXT ISSUE ON

TS MAY • 89

YIPE! LOOK AT THOSE GAMES!

REVIEWS





AND IN REPLAY:

THE REGULARS

34

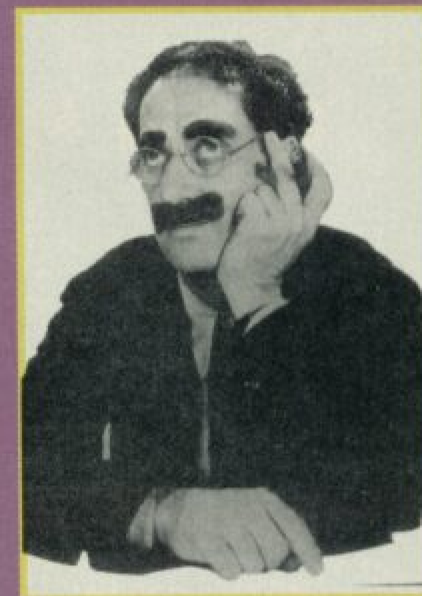


Dial Hard

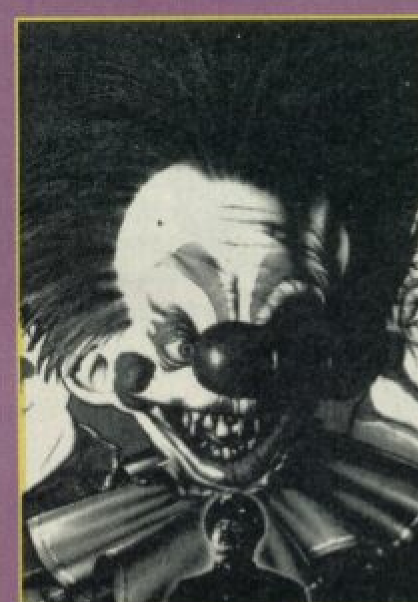
Get more from your Speccy with our new communications column. Plug in to a phone line and let your Speccy do the talking! Builds month by month into a comprehensive gardening guide, or something.

So long, SU

Okay, Kleenex out, Spec-chums! It's time to get a bit weepy. Mystery surrounds the fate of our competitor. Yup, Sinclair User, that old stalwart of the Speccy scene, has disappeared. We're still not quite sure where it's gone or whether it's coming back, but what we do know is that we're terribly sorry and we'll miss it something rotten. As soon as we heard the news, we had a quick whip-round to see if we had enough money to buy it up. Imagine what fun we'd have with another Spec mag in the Shed! After pawning Andy O's bike and selling Linda's collection of wrestling figures, we came up with the grand sum of £22.59. We gave Sinclair User a ring but the receptionist said they weren't taking any reader calls today. Anyway, if you're a new reader of YS (and if you are, where have you been for the last seven years?) then welcome to the funkiest, most skillo and only slightly crap Speccy magazine in the world. If you feel a bit lost without Sinclair User then pick up YS every month and life might seem a fishy bit brighter!

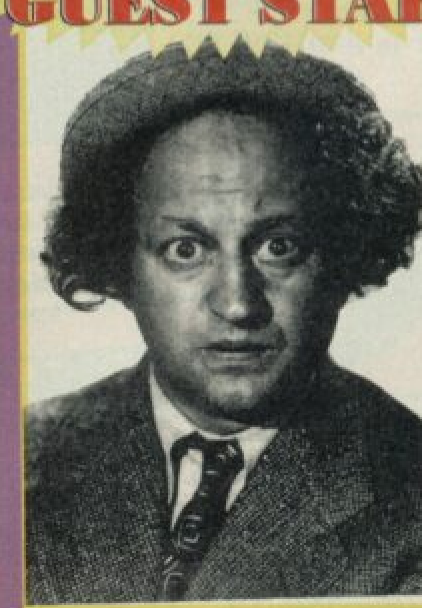


Jonathan Nash ● Editor ● Favourite clown: Groucho Marx ● Why? He's the funniest man who ever lived. Quicker than a slippery kipper and a wit so caustic you could strip wallpaper with it. Je suis Marxiste - tendance Groucho. ● Er, quite.



Andy Ounsted ● Art Editor ● Favourite clown: A Killer Klown From Outer Space ● Why? The plot's not up to much, but the Klowns are brill. And The Dickies sang the theme song. A real cult film.

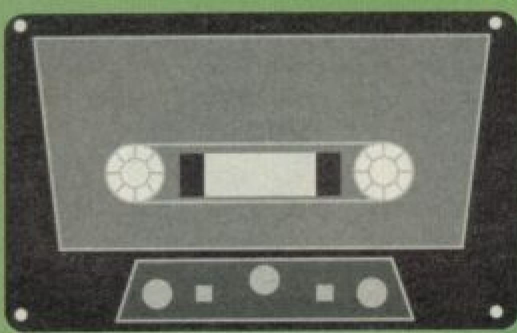
SPECIAL GUEST STAR



Leonid Brezhnev ● Ex-Premier of the Communist Party who succeeded Khruschev during a Stalinist backlash ● Favourite clown: Larry of The Three Stooges ● Why? I just dig that crazy haircut, man!

N SALE MAY 4TH

May the 4th be with you!

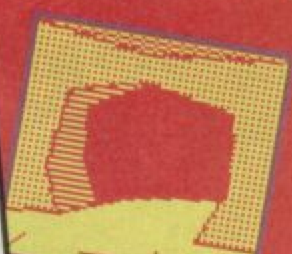


BEAUT BOX

Trickle down and cast your gaze over this lot! Two games, an adventure, a 48K music program, a +D utility program, and a mystery PD demo. Honestly, it's enough to make you denounce David Icke.



CHAOS strikes back – just over there! It's wizard (ho ho).



Spelunk your way to page six for THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE PART TWO.



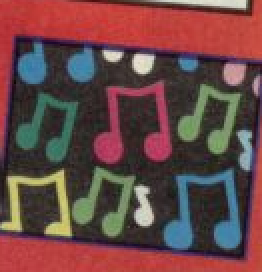
Shoot-'em-up frenzy! ANO GAIA blasts off on page six.



Tidy up your disks! +D BOOT is a-sitting on page six.



Ho for page seven and the BICIE demo!



MUSIC SYNTH 48K composes itself on page seven.



And groove to page seven for POKERAMA.

CHAOS

Julian Gollop

COMPLETE GAME

Ha! Just the game with which to annoy owners of other machines. *Chaos*, y'see, only ever came out for the Speccy. And it's a complete stormer of a game. Billed as 'a game of magical combat between two to eight wizards in an arena', it's just that. *(Handy, that. Andy)* Any or all of these wizards can be played by the Speccy, and each Speccy player can be set to one of eight difficulty levels. Basically, the idea is to take turns casting spells and moving summoned creatures in order to kill off all the other players. But! You've only got a limited time to do it in, from five minutes with two players to half-an-hour with eight of 'em. You can't make deals, or form alliances – it's every wiz for himself. (Lumme.) And talk about depth of gameplay! There's so much strategy in *Chaos* you could spend weeks ferreting out all the subtly clever bits then, a few months later, still find a couple of surprises leaping out of the woodwork, landing well-placed fists in your solar plexus and, as you go down winded, snapping 'Ha! Bet you weren't expecting that, were you?' in an irritatingly self-satisfied manner. (Well, it is by the chap who wrote



The Pope's on the attack again. That dragon is real, and Rolf's magic fire is threatening to tip the balance of power. Meanwhile, Goofy and Some String slug it out.

Rebelstar, after all.) Each turn of the game comes in three stages: Choosing Spells, Casting Spells and Movement and Combat. And in the time-honoured tradition, here's some wibble about each.



Choosing Spells

At the start of the game, each wiz receives a number of randomly-picked spells. When you list 'em, the lighter colour they're written in, the more chance you have of casting that spell, from red (10%) to white (100%). The state of the universe also helps. Y'see, each spell is either chaotic, lawful or neutral, shown by an asterisk, an arrow and a line respectively. Casting such a spell wobbles the universe in that particular direction. So, f'r instance, if everybody cast chaotic spells, the universe would become more chaotic, and further chaotic spells would become easier to cast (but lawful ones more difficult). Neutral ones don't affect anything, being neutral. It's a bit of a giveaway really.

Creature spells conjure up angry minions who will dash about and attack other wizards or their creatures. These minions have loads of funky attributes, so here's a description of 'em. (The attributes, not the minions – that would take ages.) **Combat** is the offensive power of the creature. **Ranged Combat and Range** shows how far certain creatures can shoot arrows or breathe fire, or whatever. **Defence** is its defensive power. **Movement Allowance** shows how many squares the



Casualties already. Wilf Lunn fell foul of R Swann (no relation) who in turn was zapped by Pope Pius X. Shame.

HAVEN'T WE MET SOMEWHERE BEFORE?

Let's be honest here – *Chaos* has been on a previous YS covertape. Issue 57's, to be exact. Keeping on in an honest vein, there was a massive kerfuffle with the game we were supposed to be putting on this month and at the last minute we were left flat. Blimey, eh? Luckily, we remembered *Chaos*. As well as being a mind-bendingly good game, it was one of the most popular covertapes of all. We've still got a drawer full of letters from people who missed it the first time around, or whose tape broke after playing it constantly, asking for it to pop up for an encore (so to speak). So, what the hey, eh? By popular demand, it's *Chaos* ! (again).

This is not (repeat *not*, spelt n-o-t) going to herald a period of putting old games on the Beaut Box again as 'classic covertapes' (or whatever). It's a one-off. We'll be back to normal next month but, in the meantime, why not give *Chaos* a spin? It's still as good as it ever was, and it's an exclusively Speccy game. Hurrah!

creature can move each turn (diagonals count as one-and-a-half). **Manoeuvre Rating** is its ability to disengage from hand-to-hand fighting. **Magic Resistance** is the creature's ability to resist certain types of spell. (Come on, admit it, it's a doddle.) **Casting Chance** is the percentage chance of successfully conjuring up the creature. All creature spells have a range of one (that is, you can only cast them on an adjacent square.) **Other characteristics** show the special abilities of certain creatures – namely **flying** (they can hop over other creatures and obstacles such as walls), **mount** (wizards can ride 'em for speed and protection) and **undead** (they can only be attacked by other undead or wizards' magical weapons – very nasty).

The other spells are described just over there, except for the **Disbelieve** spell. As mentioned above, you have a certain chance of successfully casting a creature. However! You can (sort of) cheat and cast it as an illusion, meaning it will always appear. Illusions act just like real creatures, except they can be disbelieved by sceptical wizards, and henceforth disappear. Right, time to go on to casting spells methinks.



With the majority of spells exhausted, it's time for a little defensive play – except for Pope Pius and Some String, who seem determined to shoot each other a lot.

Casting Spells

When you've chosen your spell (if you choose the wrong one, just choose again) you get to cast it. What a logical framework this game has. As you already know, unless you're the sort of person who just skims through instructions, creature spells can only be cast on adjacent squares. Certain spells can be cast anything up to six squares away (like walls), so just whizz the cursor to your selected point and, erm, cast that funky bit o' magic. The screen will tell you the casting range if you get stuck, so don't worry about it.

Movement and Combat

After everyone's cast their spells, it's time to attack, or (more likely) run away in panic. After selecting your creature, *Chaos* will tell you its movement allowance. For flying creatures, just bung the cursor on the square you want your minions to fly to. Perambulating creatures have to be walked around one square at a time. If you want to attack something, move your creature up to the square next to it, then move as if to go on the same square. After moving, some creatures (like those pesky elves) can now fire missiles at the opposition. Just place the cursor on an enemy that's in range and blast it.



Not-creature spells

Apart from creatures, you can cast a heady brew of offensive, defensive and just plain naughty spells. Here they are in their entirety. LOS means line of sight – you can only cast this spell if you've got a clear, erm, line of sight. Basically.

Disbelieve. Erm, already done this one. It has no range limit and will always succeed.
Gooey Blob (LOS). This must be cast in an open space. It will then spread, engulfing the enemy but leaving your creatures alone. However! If the blob is killed, anything it swallowed will be returned to the game.
Magic Fire (LOS). Like the Gooey Blob, except it kills opponents outright.
Magic Wood (LOS). Up to eight magic trees can spring up around you. Any wizard can hide in one, and there's a chance you'll find an extra spell. Of course, if you do, the tree disappears, so nip off to another one pretty darn sharpish.
Shadow Wood (LOS). You can place up to eight shadow trees provided they are placed in empty spaces, and are not next to each other or to magic woods. Shadow trees can be selected as creatures. They can't move but can attack adjacent creatures.
Magic Castle/Dark Citadel (LOS). An impregnable fortress, but one that lasts for a random number of turns.
Wall (LOS). You can place up to four walls in empty spaces. Nothing can enter or move through a wall, but flying creatures can hop over them.
Magic Sword/Knife/Bow. These give a wiz a handy weapon. They add four, two and ranged combat to the wizard's combat power respectively. You can't have the sword and the knife at the same time.
Magic Armour/Shield. These add four and two to a wiz's defensive power respectively. You can't have 'em both simultaneously.
Shadow Form. This makes a wizard semi-visible and fleet (it says here). It adds three to defence and increases movement to three. The wiz can move around without becoming engaged to a creature (oh, you know what we mean) but if the wiz attacks anything, these effects disappear.
Magic Wings. The wiz can now fly with a range of six.
Magic Bolt/Lightning (LOS). Magical attacks with limited range. Lightning has less range but is the more powerful.
Vengeance/Justice/Decree/Dark Power. Ooo, these are nasty. If you cast such a spell on a creature, it has a chance of being killed. If you cast it on a wiz, there's a chance all their creatures will vanish. Decree and Dark Power give you three attacks, the other pair, one.
Subversion (LOS). Apart from illusory creatures or mounts ridden by a wiz, you have a chance of turning a minion to your side with this 'un.
Raise Dead (LOS). Casting at a dead creature (obviously) gives you a chance of reanimating it, whereupon it becomes undead. (Gulp.) The worst is when someone uses it to create an undead dragon. (Double gulp.)
A couple of other spells. There are three or four others you can only get from magic woods. We won't spoil the surprise by telling you what they do.



A few turns later, and the Pope has succumbed to a rain of magic arrows. Rolf ventures out a bit and John Craven remains snug in his castle. It's a draw. Now – round two!

Winding things up bits

Within two or three turns, the arena will be packed with dangerous creatures, all battling away in fine old style. Sensible wizards should immediately cast a couple of defensive spells, conjure up a mount then stay safely in a corner while their creatures do all the work. (Management, eh?) Even though it tends to play defensively, the Speccy makes a fine opponent, and if no friends are to hand, taking on seven Speccy wizards at Level Eight is a splendid way to pass an hour.



Oh blimey, we forgot to mention the presentation. Each creature is animated in a spooky way, so the screen is always alight with movement. And the sound is amazingly good. Chunky magical explosions, alarming roaring dragons and a completely frightening screamy sort of warble when a wizard gets killed – it's almost too much to bear. (Mops brow.) What an utterly fab game and no mistake, Jake.

CONTROLS

Casting and movement modes – cursor movement

Q	W	E
A		D
Z	X	C

Spell selection
1=Examine spells
2=Select spell. Press Y or N for illusion or reality
3=Examine board
4=Continue game
zero=Return to main menu
I=Give information on selected creature when examining board

Casting spells
Use cursors to move to square you want to cast spell in, and press select. Creature spells can only be cast adjacent to the wizard

Movement and combat mode
S=Select creature
K=Abort movement or ranged combat
zero=ends your turn
1 to 8=highlight that wizard's creatures

Remember – if suspicious, disbelieve. And only undead can attack undead. (Erm, unless your wiz has a magic weapon, in which case, use that.)

THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE PART 2

St Bride's School

CORKING ADVENTURE



Cage, bird, bird, cage. Put the bird in the cage, make the magic pass and the bird has gone. Put the cover on the cage, make the magic pass and the bird is back. Thank you, thank you. Next I require a member of the audience.

What-ho! That Trixie, eh? She's a smart cookie, and no mistake. Bit sarcastic though. Don't take it to heart – she's that scathing about everyone. Anyway, hope you managed to deal with The Jester all right, and got a good price from the little fence for all those trinkets you snaffled. Time now to venture further into the underground caverns of a dampish nature, with, erm, Part Two of the game.

The only annoying thing about *VBC* is that to play Part Two, you'll have had to complete Part One. (You have to load in your saved position at the start, you see.) So, sadly, unless you've triumphed over all in the first bit, you won't get to see the suspicious rabbits, or the killer hippy, or anything. Still. Bit of an incentive to buckle down to last month's part, eh, what?

(Oh, and if you are one of the clever peeps who can get stuck into Part Two straight away, don't worry about the first, seemingly impossible, section. It's just there to wear you down in a funny sort of way. If you get fed up, keep entering WAIT and Trixie will eventually step in to take a hand. Okay? Okay.)

CONTROLS

See those funny pointy things on the ends of your hands? If you flop them on to the keyboard, letters appear on the screen. Can you guess the rest?

ANO GAIA

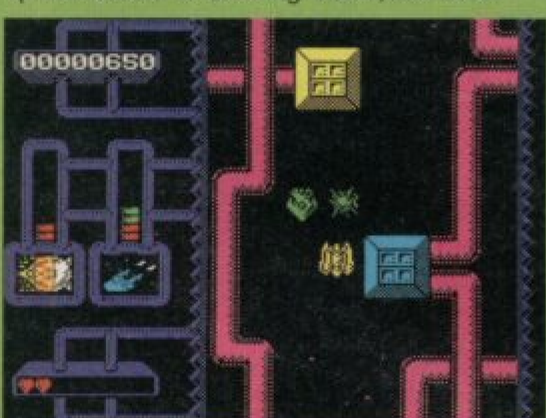
Simon Tillson

READER GAME



As the professional hitman bore down on him, the disgraced Jolly Green Giant ducked behind a wall.

Bless us and save us, eh? It's a reader game that isn't a puzzle number. *Ano Gaia* is a jolly well-written shoot-'em-up with oodles of scrolling action, tonnes of enemies and some nasty surprises on later levels. The storyline wibbles on about pollution, luxury spacecraft, gigantic pirate ships which swallow up everything in their path and waistcoats but, essentially, you have to shoot everything that moves. (Occam's Razor, eh? It's a marvel.)



These are Simon's own screenshots, you know. Pity he couldn't supply the captions as well though.

When shot, some of the baddies will leave behind power-ups. These come in two flavours – weapons and speed. If you want to collect the power-up, hold down fire until your ship is glowing, then fly over the icon. Otherwise, just shoot it for points. (When your ship is going at full pelt it's a bit tricky to control y'see.) Oh, and later on 'things' start appearing in the scenery. Crushers, drills and big squashing 'things', in fact. It's probably a good idea to avoid 'em, however hideously unfeasible this may seem.

Simon waxes lyrical in his accompanying letter about all the software tricks he used to get the game running as fast as it does. Not that it means anything, but it lends colour to the background, or something.



The bloated whalebone corset of doom spread terror throughout the galaxy. Who could stop it, eh?

CONTROLS

Joystick or definable keys. ***(Hurrah! A sensible controls box for once. Andy)***

+D BOOT

L Jespersen
Install +D DOS first

PD +D UTILITY

Well, it's a +D boot program, isn't it? Okay, okay. First of all, you need a +D interface. This is a terrific bit o' kit that connects your Speccy to a three-and-a-half inch disk drive (or, if you really feel the need, to a three-incher) and basically knocks the +3 into a cocked hat. Right. Got your +D? Fab though it is, loading programs is a bit long-winded. You either have to use the 'LOAD d*' format, or the 'LOAD p' command if you know the number of the file. And that's where *+D Boot* comes in.(Actually, it's called *MGT Boot*, but MGT's gone bust, so there.)

The best way to start with *Boot* is to format a disk and pop your DOS on it (*+sys* or *BetaDOS* or whatever). Then load *Boot*. You'll get a screen of info. Ignore this for the moment and press CAPS+S. *Boot* will now save to the disk as 'autoboot'. Now, when you enter RUN, *Boot* will craftily load in as well.

The idea behind the utility is to provide an automatic loader for your progs (hence all that waffle about the loading format). If you save a BASIC or EXECUTE file starting with a capital letter, *Boot* will present it in a smart menu when you RUN the disk. Now, by bashing the letter next to your file, you can load it in a remarkably hassle-free fashion.

You can customise *Boot* beyond all recognition by prodding this and POKEing that. Just put in a disk without any capital letter files and you'll get the instructions.

Oh, and you can take out line 9999. That was just a bodge to get it on the covertape in the first place.

CONTROLS

Load it, CAPS+S to save, then just RUN the disk as normal.

BICIE

Skusoft and Qjeta

PD DEMO

We're going to break with tradition here. This little box isn't going to describe what *Bicie* is all about. Not a word concerning its contents will trickle from this keyboard. That way you'll appreciate the demo even more. *Bicie* is a bit of a stonker – very short, but the effect is bracing. You won't believe your ears. (Damn, nearly gave it away. Quick, say something else.) Er, you can load it in 128K or 48K mode. When it loads, you can save it to tape at normal speed, but when you break into the prog, it reverts (non-destructively) to 48K mode. Nobody know why.. (Actually, we do know why in microscopically accurate detail but the explanation is unhealthily techy, so it comes to about the same thing.) Just be sure to save it out first if you want to fiddle about with it using the 128K screen editor.



Oh blimey. Still some space left. Er, er, *Bicie*, eh? What a silly name. It certainly doesn't have anything to do with the demo itself, so where does the title come from? A slang term for biscuit? *(It's all right, you can stop now, you've filled the box. Andy)*

CONTROLS

Ah! That would be telling.

MUSIC SYNTH 48K

Simon Tillson

PD UTILITY

The man behind *Ano Gaia* strikes back with this 48K music synthesiser that allows you to write three-channel tunes using only the Speccy beeper. Ha, eh? About time we put those upstart 128K owners in their place. Anything you can do, etc etc. Anyway, if you want to find out how to use this fabuloso bit o' software, then turn to page twenty-six. (That's where the instructions are, y'see.) Oh, and if you load the prog in 128K mode, save it to tape because, when you exit, you'll go to 48K BASIC strangely enough. (See *Bicie* for sort-of explanation.)

ARNIE SPEAKS AGAIN!

Hallo poopils! Dooday ve vill be lookink at form und mitre und – who iz dat tryink to sneak in late, eh? Oh no! It'z dose Your Zinglair compooda magazin skümbaks.

Hello Arnie! Could you give our readers a few tips on composing music?

Vell, okay. First ov all you neet to zoak up ze artiztic atmozphere. Zo go oot und shoot up zings viz your Uzi. Zen you neet a peezeful vorking environment, zo dedonade a few dear-gaz bomps. Vinally, you haf to orchestrade your mazterpietz. So blow sumtzing up, kaboom! Hö hö hö. It iz zo much fun, zis compozink of moozik. Uzi nine-millimeder. I'll be back!





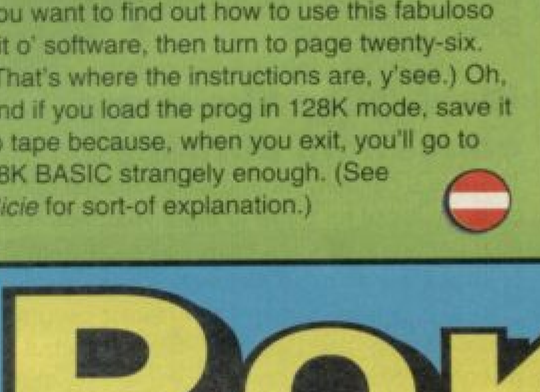
(Oh no. I don't know the words. Er, quick, busk it.) Doo doo dum de skiffle woo dum dee dee dum ratatata ha-cha dum dum dee dee doo. (Phew.)

CONTROLS

Take the magazine in your right hand. Flip to page twenty-six. Continue reading. (Honestly, some people.)

POKERAMA

Jon's been working nights this week, so when we called him to find out the contents of *Pokerama* he was barely able to string together a coherent sentence let alone describe the list of cheats. His habit of passing out and sliding away from the telephone didn't help either. In the end we rang his next-door neighbour Mrs Twills and asked her to go and find out for us. Unfortunately, in one of those coincidences that people never believe, Mrs Twills, whom Jon had never met what with his rock-and-roll lifestyle, turned out to be his Aunt Henrietta, previously thought to have been brought down by a ravenous armadillo while on safari. In all the excitement and subsequent swapping of stories and interminable home movie presentations, Mrs Twills completely forgot about us. Eventually her son Donald got out of the bath and came to the phone, but by that time we'd run out of ten pence pieces. (Thank heavens for the postal service, eh?)



Not even his closest friends knew that Gervaise was, in reality, Attribute Clash Man, saviour of somewhere quite important and defender of things.

'Staggered' Northy's lost-and-found POKEs this month are...

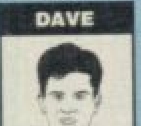
Captain Planet – infy lives
Slightly Magic – infy lives
Viz – infy shame, infy power, infy time, always qualify
Mazemania – infy lives, infy energy
Total Eclipse – infy water, infy time
Ghouls 'n' Ghosts – infy lives
Loopz – infy times

TAPE TRUBBS

Your YS Beaut Box comes to your Speccy courtesy of two wizards named Geraint the Wise and Deudimancax. Knowledgeable in the ways of mystical things and not averse to laying about themselves with a few Spells of Destruction when the queues at the post office get a tad long, they are naturally disturbed by being landed with such dreadful appellations and consequently unable to present an unbreakable barrier against loading errors and misplaced bytes. So if your tape shows signs of having slipped caddishly past a pair of disillusioned conjury types, wrap it up with a sae and post it to YS Beaut Box, May Issue, Ablex Audio Video Ltd, Harcourt, Halesford 14, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4QD. Now go to sleep for twenty-eight days and lo! a new tape will be yours.

PLAYDA

Alternative/£9.99
☎ 0977 797777



When I were a lad *(You forgot the 'Eee'. Ed)* learning wasn't supposed to be fun. Fear was the key word – though at first, of course, we didn't know that because F wasn't taught until we'd gone through A to E. Short, sharp shock treatment, that's what it was all about. And it didn't do me any harm. (Wibble.)

Okay, I admit it. I'm jealous. I wish there had been educational computer games when I was a tot. It would have been much more beneficial than spending my time avoiding flying chalk and chanting times tables. Of course in those days the games would have been based on classics like Ivor the Engine or Noggin the Nog. Sadly, these never get repeated so instead the games are based on the under-fives' faves of the moment. Hence *Playdays*.

Whatever happened to Hamble anyway?

Playdays the programme is what Play School mutated into via a brief moment when it was called Playbus (which explains the bus motif on the cover and during the credits). The star of the show is an avine of indeterminate species called the Why Bird. In *Playdays* the program, said bird acts as your host throughout the thirteen different activities (or games) and constantly gives you encouragement. If you get things wrong you're not lambasted and told to stand in the corner with a dunce's hat on. Instead Why Bird will say something like, 'Try again,' or 'That was nearly right,' or 'You're crap,' *(Er, not really. Ed)* and give you an extra clue to help you on your way to enlightenment (or something).

The thirteen games cover a wide range of skills. There's everything from shape recognition and counting to grids and dot-to-dot puzzles in there. The format of the program is fairly ingenious and, if nothing else, makes all the loading a bit more bearable by lumping together certain activities and letters in blocks. It's also an approach which means that the activities are chosen seemingly at random, so a child will never know what to expect next. (Actually, it's far from random, but, hey, who's taking notes?) *(You are, I hope. Ed)*

The program presents you with a choice of six letters. If you choose J the program uses words like jumper and job in all the activities, choose T and you get trees and, er, something else beginning with T (and so on). If you don't want any of the letters in that set, you get another lot, after enduring a bit more loading.

Once you've chosen a letter you are first shown six pictures all starting with your chosen letter, then it's on to the activities. Depending on which letter you've chosen you get to play a different set of games. When you've completed them you get to see a high score table which shows you how well you've done, then you can go back and select another letter. The only letter this doesn't apply to is X. Select X and you are taken into a specific set of three games – Noughts and Crosses, Treasure and Shapes and Colours.

We'd quite like some education, actually

There is a difficulty setting which makes the game suitable for three to eight year olds – or so the manual tells us. Personally, I reckon the activities are a bit too simple and samey to appeal to any child over six. Also the program boasts a vocabulary of over 250 words, but when you divide this by twenty-five (the letters you can play with) this works out at about, er (scribble, scribble) ten words per letter, which ain't that many. Folk of eight should certainly know more.

Using the same background graphics for every game also robs the program of excitement. A bit more variety would have made it more appealing.

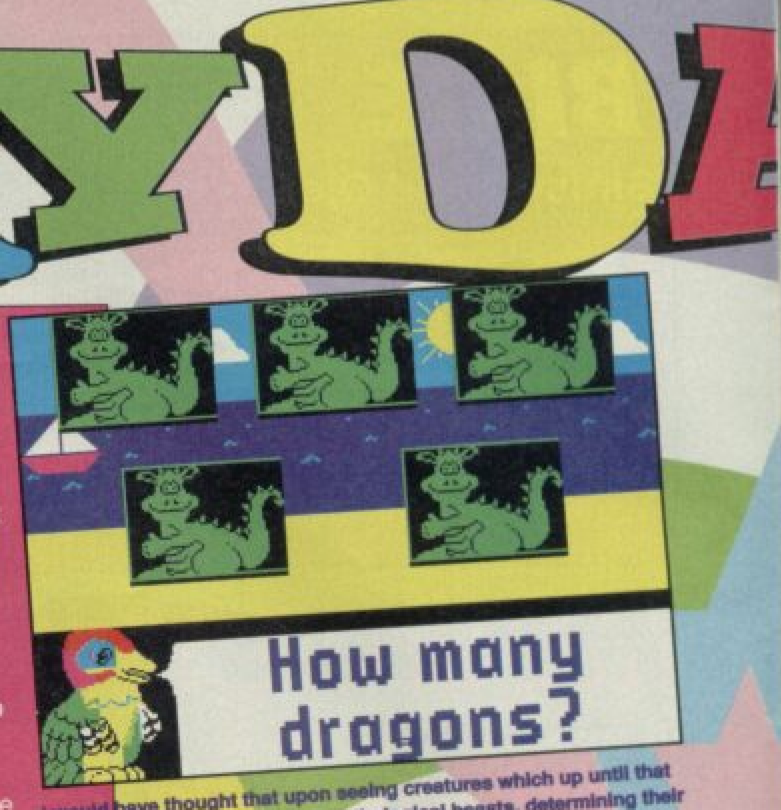
On the plus side, great use is made of the characters from the TV programme. Why Bird is an excellent host, and particularly well-drawn. Other characters, such as Wobble the clown, pop up to congratulate good work. Also

X MARKS THE SPOT

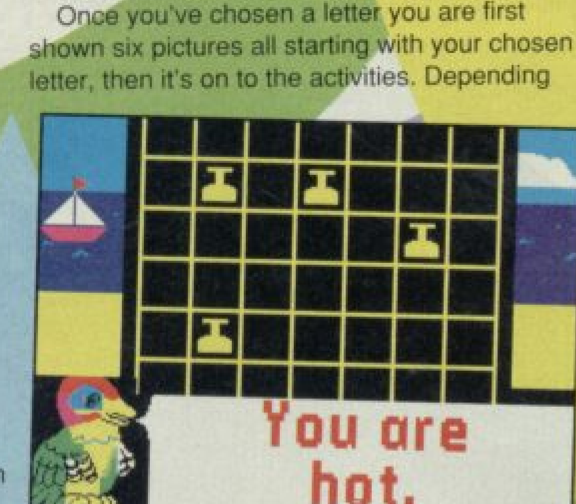
Noughts and Crosses You play the noughts and Why Bird gets the crosses. I think you know the rules to this one.

Treasure There's treasure hidden under one of those squares. Click on one and you're told whether you are hot or cold (ie near to the loot or not). Try to locate the prize in as few goes as is humanly possible.

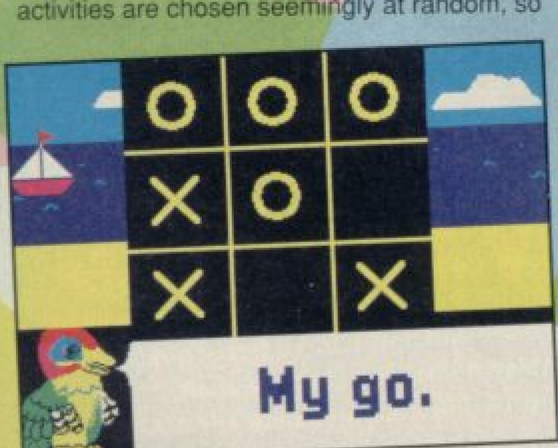
Shapes and Colours Do the colours match? Are the shapes not entirely dissimilar? On the harder levels the Why Bird cheats by changing the size of the objects or rotating them.



I would have thought that upon seeing creatures which up until that moment had been considered mythological beasts, determining their precise number would not be the most pressing of matters.



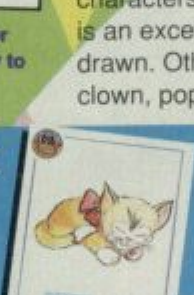
Well, thanks daddio. You're not such a mirror-cracker yourself. (Blushing, the two went skipping away only to be run down by a peculiar heavy goods vehicle.)



This satanically convoluted code, posing as a noughts and crosses puzzle, was instrumental in bringing about the downfall of Noel Edmonds' evil empire. Allegedly.

CARD GAMES

Playdays comes with a set of rather spiffy colour cards that don't link in with the program at all, but are great fun. Bright and colourful, you can use 'em to fill in that interminable wait for the tape to load with all sorts of games. Our panel of reviewers took a look.



Dave I reckon you could tear off the names and numbers from the bottom of the cards using the handy perforations and match the words with the pictures.

Jonathan No, that's far too dull. I think a spot of Tarot would while away the time nicely. Separate the numbers and words with the aid of the handy perforations, shuffle them, then lay down a set of pictures. Under those put a line of numbers or words. Then try to work out what a 'parrot over twenty shoes' next to a 'three cups over a foot' could possibly mean on an astrological level. Pat Sharpe to be the new Doctor Who perhaps?

Andy Well, I reckon you could make really good card castles. By tearing off the bottoms (my, those perforations are handy) you have two different size of cards, which means you can make some really wacky castles. A hit, definitely.

80%

AYS

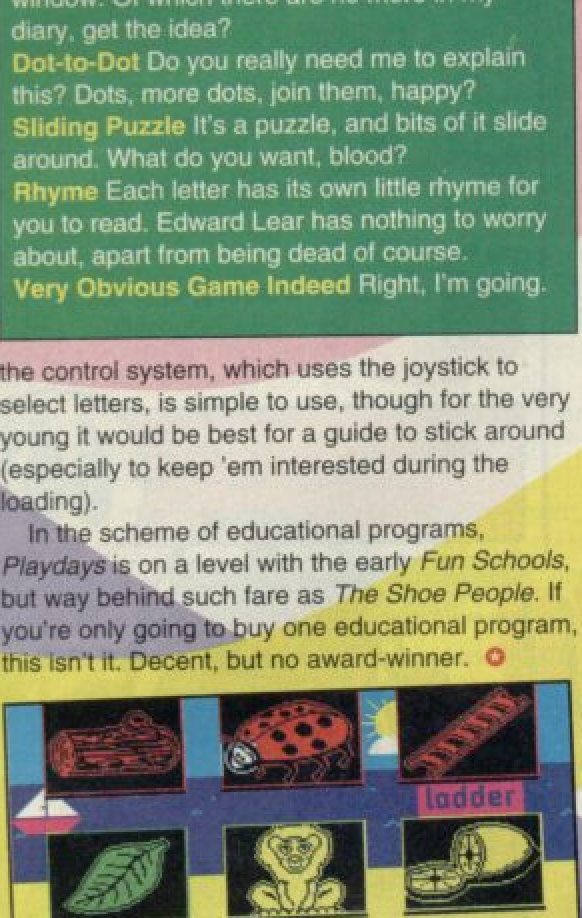
THE GAMES

as Described by Someone with No Patience At All

Matching Match the word with the picture.
Snap Obvious.
Odd One Out Obvious.
Counting Again, obvious.
What's Gone? I haven't got time for this.
Spelling I've an urgent appointment, you know.
Moving Window You get to glimpse a small portion of a large picture though a small roving window. Of which there are no more in my diary, get the idea?
Dot-to-Dot Do you really need me to explain this? Dots, more dots, join them, happy?
Sliding Puzzle It's a puzzle, and bits of it slide around. What do you want, blood?
Rhyme Each letter has its own little rhyme for you to read. Edward Lear has nothing to worry about, apart from being dead of course.
Very Obvious Game Indeed Right, I'm going.

the control system, which uses the joystick to select letters, is simple to use, though for the very young it would be best for a guide to stick around (especially to keep 'em interested during the loading).

In the scheme of educational programs, *Playdays* is on a level with the early *Fun Schools*, but way behind such fare as *The Shoe People*. If you're only going to buy one educational program, this isn't it. Decent, but no award-winner.



So do these. Litmus, leopard, lollipop, last, loopy, laissez-faire, Looby-Loo, lilac, lawnmower, labels, lope, lame, lampshade and Lionel. Good, wholesome YS words, those.

FINAL VERDICT



The characters from the show are used well. 'Random' games help to keep things fresh.



But the same graphics and games (and words) do tend to come up again and again.

The *Fun School* series is still a much better bet.

65%

THE SHED CREW

This month the Shed Crew were a bit short of things to talk about. April Fools jokes had already been done, you see. So, stealing an idea from an old issue, they decided to play charades.



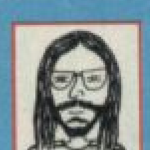
Jonathan Nash
Jonathan made a rotating movement in the air. 'It's a film!' shouted half of the crew. 'It's a play!' shouted the other half. A huge argument broke out, during which Jonathan's charade was completely forgotten, as was Jonathan himself.



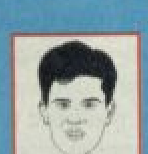
Andy Ounsted
'Mine's a record,' announced Andy. 'You're not allowed to speak!' shouted half the crew. 'There's no such category!' shouted the other half. Another huge argument broke out.



Linda Barker
Linda made a rotating movement in the air. Then she stood very still and held her arms close together above her head as if about to dive into a swimming pool A few minutes passed. 'It's my home video of Bert the Stick Insect,' she said proudly, but nobody was listening any more.



Tim Kemp
Tim mimed both opening a book and making a film. Then he pulled the top off Linda's can of Diet Coke and stuck it on his finger. Next he grabbed Andy's ruler and ran about hitting things with it, striking poses of horror, pretending to be something huge and terrifying, falling down and finally taking off the ring-pull and throwing it in the bin. 'The Lord of the Rings!' everyone shouted, because it's the only book Tim ever reads.



Dave Golder
'It's a film,' said Dave. 'Daleks: Invasion Earth 2150 AD!' chorused the crew. Dave sat in a corner and sulked.



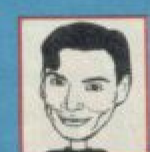
Simon Cooke
Simon started to raise his hands. 'The Maltese Falcon!' shouted everyone, beginning to regret they'd started the whole thing. Simon ran out of the room blubbering.



Tim Blackbond
AA's work experience bod Tim mimed making a film. Then he jumped on Andy's crap motorbike and drove into a wall. The rest of the crew were stumped. 'It was Steve McQueen in The Great Escape,' revealed Tim later from hospital.



Simon Hindle
Communications know-all Simon mimed making a film. Then he appeared to dial a phone number and type something at a keyboard. Then he held up his hands and started counting down on his fingers, while running around in a panic. Finally he typed something else and wiped his brow with relief. 'It was the 1983 film John Badham film War Games, in which Matthew Broderick inadvertently taps into the American nuclear defence network and almost causes World War 3,' he grinned when the others admitted defeat. Blimey.



Craig Broadbent
Craig mimed opening a book. Then he fell asleep. The crew waited for a bit, then prodded him. 'It was anything by Jeffrey Archer,' he said and nodded off again.



Phil McCardle
Ernie wrangler Phil mimed making a film. Then he pulled out a machine-gun and proceeded to shoot up the building. Finally he threw a smoke grenade out of the door and jumped through a window, commandeering a car and driving off at high speed. When the rest of the crew emerged from hiding they realised he hadn't given the answer. He was disqualified on a technicality, but nobody dared tell him.



Leigh Loveday
Leigh thought for a moment, then mimed reading a book. Then he pretended to be convulsed with laughter. 'It's me reading my copy of YS,' he said, walking off with the prize but no self-respect.

HIGH SCORES

Something good about a game? Then you'll find it next to this attractively-designed symbol (even though the teeth are a bit odd). (Oi! Andy) Yes, if a game has points of merit, this is where we'll summarise 'em.

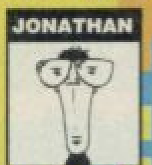
Conversely, this is where you'll find the detrimental portions of a game. Crisp, scathing comment or minor whinging, this is the box for all things bad. And, as a bonus, there are no oddly-drawn teeth in this illustration. (Go away, Andy)

99% *And the final score goes here. Actually, we're making a slight change to it. YS traditionally has had an average mark of about 70%, which is remarkably silly when you think of it. So from now on, we're using 50% as a strict average when marking games. Okay? Okay.*

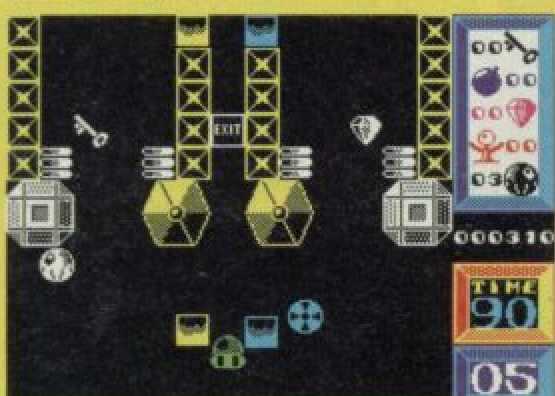
I, BALL 2



Firebird Silver/£3.99



On the one hand, there's *Agent X*. On the other, *I, Ball 2*. What are we talking about? Music. *Agent X*'s five channel 48K theme music (which really sounds as if it was composed for a film or something) is the smartest piece of sound on the Speccy. *I, Ball 2*'s title track is the worst. A completely crap melody with odd 'drum', er, 'beats' thrown in at random, it's guaranteed to reduce passers-by to tears.



How to Irritate Shirley Bassey, Lesson Six. 'Diamonds are forever, forever, forever...' 'How can you tell, then?'

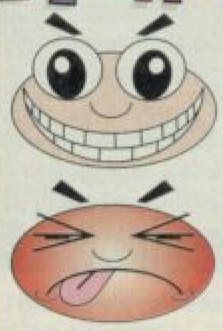


Open-mouthed people saying nothing, exits blocked on all sides... Symbolic, you know. Of something or other.

Luckily a quick stab at the fire button starts the game instead. (Phew.) Breaking with the tradition of sequels, it's substantially different to the scrolling original. Here, the ball with the I has to bounce around twenty single-screen levels, shooting things and finding valuably informative ball artefacts. Yup, basically, you play a rotund archaeologist with a gun.

'Insanely difficult' is the phrase that leaps to the lobes when describing *I, Ball 2*. To enjoy the game, firstly throw away the instructions. Secondly, adjust to the unnervingly random way you progress through the levels. (When you complete screen one, it doesn't necessarily follow you'll go on to screen two.) Then spend ages on a screen and get killed about six hundred times before you twig certain things only happen at certain times. For example, objects blocking passageways tend to explode at t minus seventy seconds (as those nice chaps at NASA have it). Next, take a course in muscular control. The game is awash with inertia, momentum and other gravitational features, and often urges you to bounce through gaps that would tax an outrageously malnourished silverfish. But at least it's fair, in an unforgivingly harsh sort of way. This doesn't stop you from shouting juicier alternatives to the game's sampled 'Oh no!', but that's by-the-by. It's a game I'd pay good money for (actually I already have), but if you decide the same be prepared for some battering of heads against desks, both of these preferably being your own.

FINAL VERDICT



'Challenging', different and smartly programmed.

It's very, very hard.

Splendid fun, but crap for the nerves.

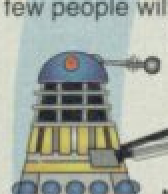
66%

DR WHO NEEDS YOU!



Yes folks, Doctor Who is in mortal peril. (Again.) But this time he faces a far greater enemy than the Cybermen. An infinitely more dangerous foe than the Sontarans. Something big and slimy and nasty that's even scarier than the ridiculously unconvincing Gastropods. Yes – it's apathy!

Alternative Software have, at last, finished *Dr Who – Dalek Attack*. But they don't think it's worth releasing the game on the Speccy, as so few people will buy it. Or so they say. Good heavens! This sounds like a job for Wembley Saveourspeccy, aka SOS Man.



As you may recall, in a previous episode of SOS Man, our hero prevented the loss of *Nigel Mansell's World Championship* by encouraging loads of peeps to fill in a bite-sized coupon saying what an awfully good idea it would be to release the game. Billions of readers did so, and lo! the moustachioed one made his appearance on the Speccy to a huge round of applause. Now, we'd like to appeal to your sense of public duty once more. Or something.

Basically, if you'd like to have the chance to buy *Dr Who – Dalek Attack*, a brand-new, full-price Speccy game, then fill in the coupon below, bung it on the back of a postcard and send it to us. You won't even need a stamp. We'll pass 'em on to Alternative who can then make the fateful decision. It's as simple as that. Obviously we're not twisting your arm – we've no idea what the game's like – but we trust the lovely folk at Alternative and, besides, the continued release of Speccy software has to be a good thing in anyone's book.

Send to The Return of Save Our Speccy, YS, Future Publishing, Freepost, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2XF.

***Dr Who – Dalek Attack*, eh? Sounds like a good idea to me. If you were to release the game, I'd be inclined to rush out and buy it, that's for sure.**

Signed..

Address..

....

....Postcode..

Remember! The fate of the universe is in your hands. (Not literally, of course. Only in the most peculiar of circumstances could not filling in a coupon bring about the end of all things. Mind you, think how embarrassed you'd feel if it happened. 'Who's responsible for destroying the universe then?' 'Erm, it was me actually. I didn't fancy *Dalek Attack* and things sort of escalated. Sorry everyone. Sorry.' Tch. Doesn't bear thinking about.)

Turn to page 35 for more reviews!

WRITE TO THE ED, YS, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW

LETTERS



Star Letter winners receive three free games! All letters win a YS badge!

Oh dear. Here I am, comfortably settled in Linda's window seat, all ready to write my first introduction for my first Letters section, and I can't think of anything. Let's see if I can draw inspiration from previous Eds' intros. (Sound of someone flipping through hundreds of back numbers of YS.) Hmmm. Well, I could be sarcastic, or aloof, or friendly, or enigmatic, or silly, or I could just plain wibble on and fill up the space without saying anything at all. Ha! That's the ticket. Erm, on with your letters then.

NO FACILITIES

I am a foreign student studying in the UK. I have come across your magazine which I am now buying regularly. I own a Speccy 48K and an Opus Discovery disk drive. Unfortunately I can find no information about the Opus system. I would very much appreciate it if you could enlighten me on how I can find some more information, such as where to get utilities for the drive, and how to connect it to a Speccy 128K. Your help would be much appreciated as there are no facilities in my country.

Anton Margion
Edinburgh

Aarghh, you've got me there. I'm more of a +D chap myself. As far as I can remember, the Opus was a dirty great metal thing which looked like it should be controlling missile launches in the Atlantic. If anyone's got any info on this behemoth among disk drives, write in and we'll put you in touch with Anton. (By the way, sorry to hear about your lack of facilities.) **Ed.**

UP A RIVER

I would like to play a game on my Speccy that I played on my MSX. The game was called *River Raid* and you had to fly up a river and shoot a lot of boats.

John Kerr
Ballymena, Co Antrim

Erm, feel free. (There's really no need to ask.) **Ed.**

SMALL CELL-LIKE SPORES

Hello! I'm back after eight years in the grave. I recently spotted a +3 in a CB shop (of all places) and after worrying whether buying it would be a bad investment – surely the Speccy was dead by now, and you couldn't get the games any more – I paid up for it. After walking round my local shops, I realised the Speccy was alive and kicking!

I found six local shops selling Speccy software, and also discovered your magazine. (I remember when it used to be Your Spectrum!) Things have certainly evolved over the eight years I've been away, and some of the things programmers can make the Speccy do are amazing. (*Shock, eh?*)

DOODLEBUGS

Total visual overload! This month's pic, courtesy of James M Collett from Godalming in Surrey, is packed with action. If you've got a 'bug, send it to Doodlebugs, YS, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. (Oh, go on.)



STAR LETTER



AMAZING RESEMBLANCE
Has anyone else noticed that the barbarian type from, erm, *Barbarian 2* bears an amazing resemblance to a certain Wolf from Gladiators? Is this just me, or is it really one and the same person?
Steve Lake
Henley on Thames, Oxon

This sounds like an excuse to ring somebody up...
(Ring ring.) Hello, is this the company that produces Gladiators the TV programme?
Yes, that is correct.
Is it true the bloke who plays Wolf used to advertise a crap Speccy beat-'em-up by posing alongside Maria Whittaker?
What do you mean, 'the bloke who plays' Wolf? All our Gladiators are real people. We've got a new one coming up next week – he's called Sink and he stands in the corner and does the washing up, in a sink, in a threatening manner.
So there you go Steve. I'm afraid it was just one of those quirky coincidences (or something). **Ed.**



It's the question on everyone's lips: are these two men in fact one and the same person? YS investigates! (In a rather crap sort of way.)

Anyway, I'm now trying to catch up on those missing eight years, and wonder if you can help. Are these programs still available: *TLL*, *3DCK*, *PAW*, *OCP Art Studio* and *Sim City*? And could you tell me which game I'm thinking of – it had small cell-like spores floating around and mating with each other and some other bad spores ate the good spores and you had to help kill the baddies. I suppose it was a bit like *Life* in 3D.
Mike McRoberts
Seacombe, Wirral

Blimey. Mike – don't move. We'll be round with a contract for your story in a couple of hours. Just think – the mysteries of life and the afterlife explained by a YS reader! We'll make millions, boy – millions! Oh damn, it was a figure of speech, wasn't it? Blast. (Long, deflated pause.) 3DCK *is still available from Incentive (☎0734 817288) and Infogrames handle* Sim City. *(They're on ☎071 738 8199.) I'm afraid you're out of luck with the other three, though. (Apparently Gilsoft have turned into a florist's shop, or something.) As to your 3D* Life *game – I have no idea. After thinking hard for quite a while, Stuart has to admit he doesn't know either, so well done, you've stumped the panel.* **Ed.**

WHAT A RIP-OFF
I write to you with a tail of major sadness. On seeing your order I immediately concocted it but then discovered something of immense importance – for some reason, you're not allowed to post them! What a rip-off. From now on, I am boycotting the postal service and hope other YS readers will do the same. In the meantime, unless you can come up with some ideas, my small business is doomed!
Mat Towers
Birstall, Leicester

(Very long pause.) Nope, I haven't got a clue what he's on about. There will be a small and laughably inadequate prize for anyone who can successfully explain the point of this letter. Send your entries to 'I'm sorry Wallace – he's quite, quite mad', YS, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. **Ed.**

I DON'T SEE WHY
I have got an Atari ST as well as a rubber-keyed Spectrum 48K. I don't see why Spectrum owners always say how awful STs are. I use my Spectrum for games which you can only get on Spectrums, and my ST for games which you can only get on the ST.
Matthew Wills
Chelmsford, Essex

So what happens when you find a game you can get on both then? **Ed.**

A VARIATION ON IAN'S IDEA
I have a variation on Ian's idea in issue 87. How about a readers' Top 100 Games Of All Time? I think it would be a good idea. One more point – please bring back the Crap Games Corner as it was brilliant fun reading your reviews for games written by the readers.
Marcus Dyer
Clevedon, Avon

Readers' Top 100 Games, eh? Sounds fun. (Thinks: fifty thousand entries for Count Duckula 2 out of spite.) Let me mull it over for a bit

SMALL PRINT



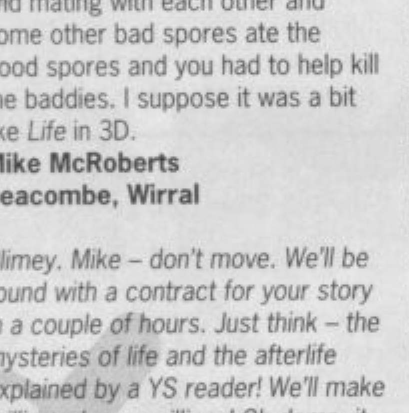
My bus pass expires on Monday.
Anon, Anonville
I got away with using my old one for three weeks before I was caught. **Ed.**

All right, which one of you is always saying 'spook!'?
Edward Sykes, Lancaster
It wasn't me, sir, it was Freemley of the Lower Third. Honest. **Ed.**

I do love a gloat.
Robin Barmand, Yeovil
I find that a pointed smirk does the job just as well. **Ed.**

Never mind Richard Longhurst, Talisman of The Mad Guys looks exactly like Quentin Tarantino (the director of Reservoir Dogs).
Mighty Mouse, Gloucester
But I expect each is unique in his own special way. Anyway, how did you get in to see Reservoir Dogs? I mean, you're underage and a fictional cartoon character after all. **Ed.**

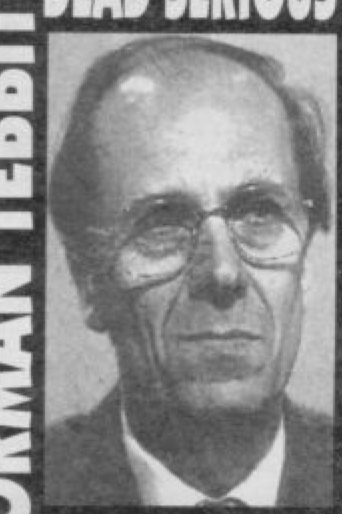
WONDERFUL WORLD OF SPECCY



I want to know if you can tell me how much is the magazzine with the cassette included for my sinclair. Can give me a list of your best games (*Robocop, Mercs* and *Shadow Dancer*).
I would like to know if I can receive one Your Sinclair magazzine per months.
It's best if you send me all before march, because in March I start Hi School, and I thing that I couldn't buy a lot of things.
Bye.
Alejandro Genta
Montevideo, Uruguay

Hola! (Or something.) To answer your questions in order... the mag costs an amazingly reasonable, erm, (looks) £2.50. (£2.50? Splutter. In my day... etc etc.)
Erm, Robocop, Mercs *and* Shadow Dancer *(I suppose).*
Yes, but as we don't do subscriptions any more, you'll have to be very clever and order each number monthly from the Back Issues department. (And it won't cost you any more than £2.50 – p&p is included.)
Right, will do.
Bye then. **Ed.**

NORMAN TEBBIT'S DEAD SERIOUS CORNER



OUR BELOVED BLACK BOX

My friends always ridicule me at school by deliberately asking me what computer I own. Some of my friends own two computers and three consoles, and I got really fed up with them, so I decided to do one of two things. Either I'd abandon my Speccy and buy a console, or I'd embark on a campaign to convince all my friends about the potential of the Speccy.

You will be pleased to hear that I chose not only to convince my friends but also to try to convince certain computer shops in the area. I have so far written to many shops in my area encouraging them to continue selling our beloved black box and its games. I have also written to Virgin and Ocean.

Could you please give me some more information about the SOS campaign and any suggestions about any other action I can take.

On a lighter note, I must tell you how disappointed I was with last year's Future Entertainment Show. The crowds were huge and there was no sign of a Speccy in the whole of Earls Court. The closest I came to seeing a Speccy was finding an issue of YS which I already had, and the nearest I came to meeting the YS bunch was seeing Jonathan lounging around in a temporary shed erected near the Future stand. Oh, and the closest I came to enjoyment was fiddling with a Superscope for the SNES, with which I killed some moles. *(That's horrible. Oh, I see. Ed)*

Finally, I think it's time for a little humour. Humour. (Trust me, this is very, very funny.)

Paul Annett
Waterlooville, Hants

What a complete star. I don't think I can give you any better advice than to keep on with what you're doing – remember, Nigel Mansell's World Championship came about solely because of the terrific response to the original SOS campaign. (Well, sort of solely, anyway.) The simple fact is, if the software houses think people would buy their games if brought out on the Speccy, they'll release 'em. It's a tough, cut-throat world (etc etc). Let us know how you get on. Oh, and I don't lounge. I rest between engagements. **Ed.**

and work out how to do it. (He means, go and look through Amiga Power to see how they did it. Andy)

You may have enjoyed Crap Games Corner, but I don't think the people who wrote the games did. They didn't realise it was a joke, you see, and got awfully upset when Rich creamed their pride and joy. Besides, we haven't been sent any truly crap games for a while. **Ed**

I HAVE TO KNOW

Okay, it's been puzzling me for years. I have to know. Is it Bath, Avon, or Bath, Somerset?

M Francis
Somerton, Somerset

Well, 'M'. (How terribly formal. Perhaps we should call the mag Y Sinclair. Perhaps not.) Erm, I don't actually know. Geography was never my strong point. I spent all my lessons drawing beautiful maps and adding little islands all of my own. However! Andy has just plucked at my sleeve, so maybe he can help out. Hello. Back in the early 1970s, all of the West Country (including Bath) which used to be called Somerset suddenly found itself part of Avon due to some creative boundary re-drawing, or something. Local people launched a Keep Somerset Somerset campaign, but it failed. So I can say, without fear of recrimination, that Bath is indeed in Avon. It's official.

Well, there you go. But at least you only had two possibilities to guess from – do you know how many Newports there are in the country? **Ed.**

FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT GAME

Could you inform me if there exists, or are plans for, a sequel to the very enjoyable football management game *The Double?*

If you don't know of any sequel, could you please tell me if there's a way to update the players' names in the program itself?

R Henry
Woking, Surrey

Oh no! And I thought I'd seen the last of football management games for ever. (When I was the new bug at YS, the others thought it a great jape to send me all the footy management games they could possibly get their hands on.) Getting back to the point, no, I've not heard of any plans to make a follow-up. But despair not! Here's the Official YS Management Sim for you to type in and enjoy.

```
10 PAPER 0: INK 6: BORDER 0:
CLS: PRINT "Welcome to the Official
YS Management Simulator."
20 INPUT "Type in your name, team
and players:"; a$,b$,c$
30 PRINT "Calculating statistics."
40 FOR F=1 TO 1000: PRINT AT
5,0; RND*100: NEXT F
50 PRINT "Bad luck, your team
lost.": GOTO 20
```

You can change the players' names and everything. It's packed with features, and it's perfect for fans of the genre. I'm giving it 79%. **Ed.**

ONE-YEAR-OLD+

Is it possible to send back one-year-old+ YS covertapes that don't work?

Chris Taylor
Ulverston, Cumbria

Yes, it's perfectly possible. You just won't get anything back. (Ah! Ah! Ah! As they say.)

Y'see, Ablex (they being the tape duplicating bods) only keep copies going back a couple of months in case of faults. And it's no use sending 'em to the Shed – we don't keep copies at all. By the way, why did it take you over a year to find out your covertapes don't work? **Ed.**

MY FRIEND

Could you review the game *Colony?* (My friend has it on the Amstrad.)

Thomas Saul
Farnborough, Hampshire

OK. (Cough.) Colony: *Thomas's friend thinks it's really good on the CPC, so it's probably all right on the Speccy. (We aim to please.)* **Ed.**

TRAINSPOTTERS



NO CHEAT FOR *STEG*

Oh, come on YS, I always thought you were a sensible mag, but I've found loads of mistakes in issue 87. They are (a) in Practical POKEs there is no cheat for *Steg* even though it's in the index, (b) some of the *Fantasy World Dizzy* tip was reprinted in the bit on *Laser Squad*, and (c) in the same issue's Practical POKEs you actually misspelt *Space Harrier* as *Space Hurrier*.

Elliot Castro
Battlefield, Glasgow

Oh no, not you again. (Elliot, dear readers, was the first person to spot the, erm, faux pas with Rebelstar.*) Bad luck this time, though. There I was, reeling on the ropes from your double-barrelled onslaught of (a) (Aarghh) and (b) (Ooooof) when I noticed you completely missed the point of the joke in (c). And, as Trainspotters have to be trainspotter-free themselves, I think I got out of that one rather nicely. By the way – watch that 'oh, come on' stuff. You'll end up on 'why oh why' and be ostracised by society.* **Ed.**

SIMON SAID

I claim a trainspotter because in the 'Orange Alert' bit of Spec Tec Jr in issue 86 Simon said, 'It's about ime I got a new secretary, methinks.' He should have said, 'It's about time...' You can't tell me this is a typing error, so please send me a trainspotter.

Ian Robins
Yeovil, Somerset

Simon! Explain yourself. Actually, I can tell you it was a typing error, because it was a typing error, but it wasn't my fault. It was my new secretary. But I thought you were still looking for one. So I am. Oh no! I must be trapped in a temporal paradox. (Detective vanishes in a spooky swirly vortex.) There. Ian, I hope you're happy. **Ed**

FLYING SCOTSMAN

Next to the *Rebelstar* instructions in issue 87 is a white box with the heading 'Challenge the Mad Scotsman.' This should read, 'The Flying Scotsman.' Ho ho, hand over that trainspotter.

John Turland
Waterlooville, Hampshire

I decided to put this to the test, and threw Stuart out of the nearest window. Not only did he fail to fly, but he broke both his legs. Realising my mistake, I then shackled his poor, crumpled frame to a luxury passenger carriage and bade him pull it to London in record time, but, again, things did not go according to plan. Basically, John, what I'm trying to say here is, no, you can't have a trainspotter. Ho ho. **Ed.**

OOH, SOU

Stop that! You know I'm ticklish. Oh, hello again. Welcome back to Ooh, Sourcey! – the column that puts the 'erm' in 'erm, I'd like to learn machine code'. Utilising the frightening concept of presenting you with a complete program and then taking you through it step-by-step, Ooh, Sourcey! aims to have you up and coding in next to no time. *(So that's 'no time' then. Or in other words, 'never'. Tch, eh? Andy)* And so, on to this month's offering. It's the decompressor part of our screen packer program, and it's a complete doddle to follow after the first bit. Would I lie to you? Over to Jonathan for the details.



Unpacking your pictures

Today's instalment deals with decompressing the screens you packed using last month's routine. As before, we'll start with the complete listing, and take it to bits. Oh, and as before again, here's the thinking behind the routine.

The decompressor is far simpler than the compressor. All it does is to look through the packed data one byte at a time. If the byte in question is not the infamous 'control byte' then it is deemed to be data, and is bunged directly on to the screen. Otherwise, the routine takes the following pair of bytes to mean (data byte) (number of times to write it) and uses a loop to expand the data to screen. So, for example, if the compressed data was (control byte) (one hundred) (fifty) then the byte one hundred would be written to the screen fifty times. Basically, it's the reverse of the compressor. Erm, which is pretty obvious really. (Oh dear.) Well, here's the listing, anyway. As with last month, those of you without assemblers can use the Decimal Loader at the end.

```
; assemble to address 32832
start           DI
                PUSH BC
                POP HL
                LD BC, routine_length
                ADD HL, BC
                LD DE, screen
get_next_byte   LD A, (HL)
                CP control_byte
                JR Z, compress
                LDI
check_ended     LD A, D
                CP screen_end_high
                JR NZ, get_next_byte
                EI
                RET
decompress      INC HL
                LD A, (HL)
                INC HL
                LD B, (HL)
                INC HL
fill            LD (DE), A
                INC DE
                DJNZ fill
                JR check_ended

; labels
end             EQU $
screen_end_high EQU 91
control_byte    EQU 47
routine_length  EQU end-start ; ie, 35
```

Put it where you like

The decompressor is relocatable, or in other words, you can load your compressed screen to any address (within reason, natch) without worrying about the wrong part of memory being used. The way this is achieved is thanks to the rather crafty BC register pair. Whenever you execute a machine code routine from BASIC (ie, PRINT USR.... RANDOMIZE USR... or LET variable=USR...) BC holds the entry address. So, if you typed RANDOMIZE USR 55000, BC would be 55000. PRINT USR 32768 and BC holds 32768. You get the idea. This feature is used to calculate where the compressed data is held by adding the length of the actual routine to BC and making this the base data address. Et voila – one routine that doesn't care where you put it.

```
DI
PUSH BC
POP HL
LD BC, routine_length
ADD HL, BC
LD DE, screen
```

Remember the old PUSH/POP combination? (It's the equivalent to LET regpair2=regpair 1.)

So that's where the 91 comes from

```
get_next_byte   LD A, (HL)
                CP control_byte
                JR Z, fill
                LDI
check_ended     LD A, D
                CP screen_end_high
                JR NZ, get_next_byte
                EI
                RET
```



The main loop. If the byte in HL (the data) is not the control byte, then it is simply put straight in DE (the screen). LDI is a shorthand way of writing LD A, (HL) / LD (DE), A / INC HL / INC DE. (It actually stands for LoaD and Increment, you see.) As with last month's prog, we use the fact that the next byte after the screen is 23296 to make sure we stop when at the end of the screen.

So why is 91 used rather than 23296 then? The Speccy can only store numbers from zero to 255 in a single register (8-bit numbers) and must slap two single registers together to address numbers up to 65535 (16-bit numbers). The basic (and BASIC) equations to handle this are LET low= number-256*INT (number/256): LET high= INT (number/256) to convert a 16-bit number to two 8-bit ones, and LET number= low+256*high for the other way. And as 23296 converts to 0+256*91, 91 is the 8-bit number for us. Interested parties should look up binary in their manuals for a far cleverer explanation of 'n'-bit numbers. (Phew.)

She blew up to twice her size

```
decompress      INC HL
                LD A, (HL)
                INC HL
                LD B, (HL)
                INC HL
fill            LD (DE), A
                INC DE
                DJNZ fill
                JR check_ended
```

A-ha! The interesting bit. Now, as you recall, the compressed data is stored as (control byte) (data byte) (number of times data byte is written). So this piece of code skips the control byte – since it's just used as an identifier – and loads the A register with the data byte and the B register with the count byte. This handy information is then put to good use by the DJNZ command. This stands for Decrement and Jump if Not Zero. (Phew.) In plainish language, it decreases the B register and jumps back unless B=0, or in words of one syllable, it loops.

RCEY!



Of interest to non-assemblers

```
end               EQU $
screen_end_high   EQU 91
control_byte      EQU 47
routine_length    EQU end-start
```

For the benefit of persons without assemblers a quick word about EQUs. These 'equate' labels with numbers, or to put it in BASIC terms, they LET x=y. The $ bitty is a special assembler function which means 'this address when assembled' so, in our case, the label 'end' will point to the physical end of the routine. One quick subtraction of 'start' from 'end' later and you've got the routine length – a snug thirty-five bytes.

Changes

A slight change to last month's routine – we're no longer compressing the data at address 49152, but at address 32867. This is just after the decompression routine, so we can save the whole lot in one go. (Very useful, honestly.) All you have to do is change last month's 'to' equate in the assembly listing to read

```
to          EQU 32867
```

or change line 100 of the decimal listing to

```
100 DATA 243, 33, 0, 64, 17, 99, 128, 229, 813
```

There. Easy, wasn't it?

Bugs

Erm, whoops. There was a major bug in the assembly listing in the ohmigod-there's-a-line-missing sense. The first part of the routine should read

```
            DI
            LD HL, from
            LD DE, to
next_byte   PUSH HL
            POP IX
            LD A, (IX+0)
            CP control_byte (etc...)
```



Yes, the unspeakably important command LD A, (IX+0), which actually grabs a byte from the screen, disappeared. Ironically, the decimal listing is perfectly right, which just goes to prove something although I'm sure I don't know what. Hahahahaha. I trust none of you killed yourselves upon finding the assembly listing didn't work. Haha. (Gulp.)

Almost, almost...

We're getting there. Type in this BASIC program (which is heavily based on last month's) for the full compressy effect.

```
1 REM Ooh, Sourcey! screen compressor
10 REM
20 REM
30 PRINT "Load screen to be compressed": LOAD "" SCREEN$
40 LET oldlen=6912: REM length of screen
50 LET endaddr=USR 32768: LET newlen=endaddr-32832
60 CLS: PRINT "OK" ' ' "Crunched "; 6912-newlen; " bytes" ' ' "Length: "; newlen;" bytes" ' ' "Efficiency: "; 100-(INT (100*(newlen/oldlen))); "%"
70 INPUT "Filename ";a$: SAVE a$ CODE 32832, newlen+35
80 STOP
9998 SAVE "Compressor" LINE 9999: SAVE "comp.c" CODE 32768, 99: STOP
9999 POKE 23693, 7: BORDER 0: CLEAR 32767: LOAD "comp.c" CODE: RUN
```

And RUN 9998 to save it. Now, whenever you compress a screen, a copy of the decompressor will be saved along with it. To expand the screen use LOAD "filename" CODE address: RANDOMIZE USR address.

Carry on coding

Hello, non-assembler peeps. (Or assembler peeps who don't really trust the listing after last month's mix-up, hem hem.) To get your hands on the decompressor, load up last month's Decimal Loader (look, it's no use crying, we warned you it would be needed again) and tag these lines on the end to implement the decompression routine. Then save the whole lot once more with RUN 9998. (Yes, you'll need it again next month.)

```
170 DATA 248, 19, 120, 24, 223, 68, 82, 74, 858
180 DATA 243, 197, 225, 1, 35, 0, 9, 17, 727
190 DATA 0, 64, 126, 254, 47, 40, 9, 237, 777
200 DATA 160, 122, 254, 91, 32, 244, 251, 201, 1355
210 DATA 35, 126, 35, 70, 35, 18, 19, 16, 354
220 DATA 252, 24, 238, 999
```

Homework

And that's it. Well, very nearly. It's that blimmin' control byte. What happens if your screen has a lot of forty-sevens scattered about the place? If they appear singly, the compressor stores them as three bytes (think about it), so you could theoretically end up with a 'compressed' screen that's three times as big as the original. Spook! What you need is a count program that will look through a screen for the byte that appears the least number of times, then use that as the control byte. And that's what we'll be looking at in part three of the Ooh, Sourcey! screen compression saga.



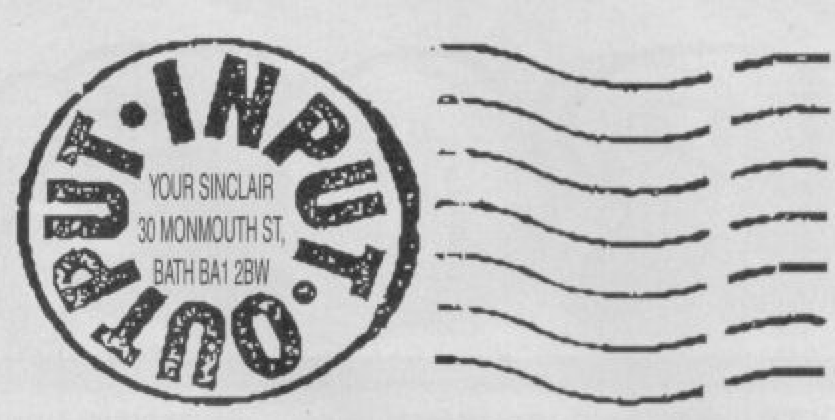
Join us next month for the final part of the compressor – the count routine. Expect lots of 16-bit maths and a clutch of register pairs working their wee hearts out. Be here, or be hilariously confused while buying a pot roast by Jack Douglas twitching behind you in the queue. ('Ere, keep your hands off my baubles.)



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■ Double-density double-sided disk drive for +2A. All offers considered. **Phone Andy now on 0885 483555.**
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■ Urgently wanted! Original copy of *Carrier Command* in good condition, will pay original price. You deliver. **Phone Matthew after 1600; not between 22nd and 30th of May.**
■ I want your *Final Fight*, *Duck Tales* for Game Boy, *Navy SEALS*, *TMHT 2*. I will swap *Super Mario Land* for Game Boy, *The Simpsons*, *Dizzy*, *Top Gun*. **Phone Jason on 0248 421743.**
■ A desperate cheese-bishop needs *Sim City* and *Pipemania* and will give you *WWF*, *Rambo 3*, *Run the Gauntlet* and *Combat School* and all the suede you can drink. Ooh monsieur, c'est une bargain, oui? Yes it is, Mr Davro. **Phone 0223 352506 and ask for Jim.** *(So that's his real name! Ed) (Whose? Andy) (Don't you dare! Jim)*
■ Badly wanted – *Flying Shark*. I really want it and will swap *Chase HQ 2*, *St Dragon*, *Shadow Warriors*, *Pit-Fighter* and *NARC* for it. **Call Simon on 0527 66743 between 1800 and 2100.**
■ I want *Mario Bros*. Will swap *Jack the Nipper* and *Deactivators* for it. Also wanted: *Power Drift* and *Dizzy's Excellent Adventures* – will swap *R-Type*, *Vigilante*, *Scooby-Doo* and *The Trap Door* for 'em. **Phone Jonathan on 0869 47223.**
■ 3.5" disk drive and interface for +3. Will pay up to £40. **Phone KA Marshall on 0742 332304.**
■ We're just starting out on a second-hand Speccy +3 and need lots of games for +3 disk suitable for a nine-year-old girl. Can you help? **Phone Kaye on 0792 846098.**
■ I would change games to games or to magazines. Any year YS, SU, CRASH, C&VG. I have 3100 games and a Spectrum+. I send a list if you need. **Write to George Lederer, 3/b Dunadulo Street, 1212 Budapest, Hungary.**
■ Wanted! *(So that's why it's in the Wanted column then. Ed)* Multiface 128 for +2. **Call Simon on 0462 732205.**
■ *Skool Daze*, *MOVIE*, *Total Recall* on Speccy 128K or 48K. **Phone Middlesex 8908920 and ask for Jon.**
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■ CCS wargames *Overlord*, *Blitzkrieg* and *Avalanche*. **Phone 021 471 1943 after 1930 and ask for Paul.**
■ Has anyone out there got *Op Wolf*, *Op Thunderbolt* and *Double Dragon 2*? I will swap for *Rambo 2*, *Gauntlet 2* and *Silent Shadow*, one for one. **Phone Darren on Fincham 622.**
■ 'Zucchini!' 'No thanks, I'm trying to give them up.' 'It's all right chaps, he's one of us.'
■ Does anyone of ATY Computing Ltd? I have an interface of theirs and I do not know how to use or operate it. It's a black box with a green connecting edge. On the top left-hand side is a black button. Any info gratefully received. **Phone TJ Ridge on 0405 769488.**
■ *Hero Quest* and *Return of the Witch Lord*. I will swap my +3 Magnum light phaser and games. **Call Ian on 0232 776108.**
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PROGRAM PITSTOP



Now, co-starring with Sir Richard Swann, it's CRAIG BROADBENT and his magical typing fingery things.

Eugapae! Eugapae! Eugapae! (That's Latin for "yippee", you know.) For you join me here in the midst of rural Wiltshire once more, savouring a long-awaited weekend break away from that fountain of knowledge (and purveyor of extremely tricky practical assignments) they call Reading University. And here with me this month are my very good pals from the old alma mater, John and Jessica, who are helping me greatly (honest!) with the laborious task of compiling Pitstop. Pass me that brown envelope, John. (Sound of brown envelope being passed over.) Thanks. That was of great help. Oh, and Jessica, could you switch on the Speccy? (Sound of Speccy being switched on.) They're invaluable, they really are.

A FAST LOADER

by Richard Swann

Or (and I quote) "the next best thing to a disk drive". This program was originally titled *Rich-Load* by its creator, but that was a silly name, so I was forced to exercise my extensive editorial powers. As you will no doubt have noticed, your friend and mine Dicky is back once more, and I'm beginning to wonder how he can manage to work on his degree and churn out vast quantities of Speccy programs at the same time. Oh hang on. He's doing Computer Science isn't he? That would explain it. Cutting sarcasm aside, this is a jolly good fast loader, and, credit where credit's due, Dicky's done a marvellous job. To use the thing, type in the BASIC (all code to be generated is contained within the main BASIC program) and save it off with SAVE "filename" LINE 0. At this stage, the program is completely untainted, ready and waiting to be customised for your individual programs. Easily done. Just RUN it, answer the searching and highly personal questions with which you will be presented, and then save it off wherever it'll be of most use. Just to give you some idea of what it can do, the options are backwards or forwards loading, start and length of code to save/load, speed of tone (the blue and red bit) and bytes (the yellow and blue bit), and a choice of four predefined colour schemes. Once you've customised the loader, you can only use it to load in code of a particular length to a certain address, so make sure you keep the "pure" copy on tape. When all's done and ready, enter RANDOMIZE USR 64900 to save your code (make sure the tape's running), and RANDOMIZE USR 64914 to load it in again. And finally, a quick hint for people who don't know the memory map like the back of their hands – the default address and length given are those needed for saving/loading a screen, so just use these to achieve the same effect as SCREEN$.

LISTING 1

BASIC

```
10 REM Rich-Load
15 REM by Richard Swann
20 CLEAR 63999
30 LET t=0
40 FOR n=23296 TO 23356
50 READ a: LET t=t+a
60 POKE n,a: NEXT n
70 IF t<>8772 THEN PRINT "Error in DATA from 390 to 490": STOP
80 RANDOMIZE USR 23296: LET t=0
90 FOR n=64900 TO 64927
100 READ a: LET t=t+a
110 POKE n,a: NEXT n
120 IF t<>3179 THEN PRINT "Error in DATA from 500 to 540": STOP
130 CLS : PRINT AT 0,10;"RICH - LOAD"; AT 2,0;"The loading system has been transferred to RAM. Now you need to configure it."
140 INPUT "FORWARDS or BACKWARDS? "; LINE f$: IF LEN f$=0 THEN GO TO 140
150 IF f$(1)<>"f" AND f$(1)<>"F" AND f$(1)<>"b" AND f$(1)<>"B" THEN GO TO 140
160 IF f$(1)="b" OR f$(1)="B" THEN POKE 65068,43: POKE 65219,43
170 IF f$(1)="f" OR f$(1)="F" THEN POKE 65068,35: POKE 65219,35
180 INPUT "START of code (default ";PEEK 64902+256*PEEK 64903;") ";st: IF st<0 OR st>65535 THEN GO TO 180
190 INPUT "LENGTH of code (default ";PEEK 64905+256*PEEK 64906;") ";ln
200 IF ln<0 OR ln>65535 THEN GO TO 190
205 IF f$(1)="b" OR f$(1)="B" THEN LET st=st+ln
210 POKE 64903,INT (st/256): POKE 64902,st-((INT (st/256))*256)
215 IF f$(1)="b" OR f$(1)="B" THEN LET st=st-2
220 POKE 64917,INT (st/256): POKE 64916,st-((INT (st/256))*256)
230 POKE 64906,INT (ln/256): POKE 64920,PEEK 64906: POKE 64905,ln-((INT (ln/256))*256): POKE 64919,PEEK 64905
240 INPUT "Speed increase for BYTES" ' "(Default ";59-PEEK 65016;",Minimum -78, Maximum +49. ";a
250 IF a<-78 OR a>49 THEN GO TO 240
260 POKE 65231,203-(a/1.5): POKE 65016,59-a: POKE 65049,66-a: POKE 65055,62-a: POKE 65070,49-a
270 INPUT "Speed increase for TONE" ' "(Default ";164-(PEEK 64991);", Minimum -
```

```
45, Maximum 160 ";b
280 IF b<-45 OR b>160 THEN GO TO 270
290 POKE 64991,164-b: POKE 65160,(164-b)*1.21
300 INPUT "Colour scheme for TONE" '
"(Default ";PEEK 65128;",range 0 to 3) ";x
310 IF x<0 OR x>3 THEN GO TO 300
320 POKE 65128,x
330 INPUT "Colour scheme for BYTES" '
"(Default ";PEEK 65185;",range 0 to 3) ";y
340 IF y<0 OR y>3 THEN GO TO 330
350 POKE 65185,y
360 PRINT : PRINT AT 0,10;"RICH –
LOAD"; AT 2,0;"The FAST loader can be
used to SAVE or LOAD a block of machine
code. "
370 PRINT : PRINT "SAVE ""CODE"" CODE
64900,385"
380 PRINT : PRINT "To SAVE,
RANDOMIZE USR 64900. To LOAD,
RANDOMIZE USR 64914."
390 DATA 33,194,4,17,194,253,1
400 DATA 67,1,237,176,62,253
410 DATA 50,57,254,50,231,253
420 DATA 62,254,50,253,253,50
430 DATA 196,253,50,13,254,50
440 DATA 41,254,50,110,254,50
450 DATA 125,254,50,132,254,50
460 DATA 147,254,50,157,254
470 DATA 50,96,254,50,204,254
480 DATA 50,215,254,50,229,254
490 DATA 201
500 DATA 221,33,0,64,17,0,27
510 DATA 62,255,167,205,194
520 DATA 253,201,221,33,0,64
530 DATA 17,0,27,62,255,55
540 DATA 205,86,254,201
```

SORTER

by Alan Gibson

Providing a short but much-needed break from the omnipresent Swann is Alan Gibson, with a short routine which simply sorts out a table of values (each with an identity number) from highest to lowest. Erm... and that's about it. You can stick the routine anywhere in memory, but it always reads from the same addresses. That is, 65000 to 65029 must contain the values to be sorted, 65030 must hold the maximum possible value, and 65040 onwards get used by the program so as to return the identity numbers in order. Could be useful for writing a footy manager game or something – Alan's demo is certainly this way orientated. See what you think.

LISTING 2

BASIC

```
10 REM Decimal Loader by Cap'n Craig
20 CLEAR 63999: RESTORE 1: LET x=200
30 FOR f=64000 TO 64039 STEP 8
40 LET t=0: FOR g=0 TO 7
50 READ a: POKE f+g,a: LET t=t+a: NEXT g
60 READ a: IF t<>a THEN PRINT
"Checksum Error at line ";x: STOP
70 LET x=x+10: NEXT f
80 PRINT "Data POKEd into memory OK."
90 INPUT "Save to tape? ";s$
100 IF s$="Y" OR s$="y" THEN INPUT
"Filename? ";f$: SAVE f$CODE 64000,40
200 DATA 58,6,254,1,16,254,33,232,854
210 DATA 253,87,62,255,190,122,40,7,1016
220 DATA 190,40,10,35,35,24,242,61,637
230 DATA 254,0,200,32,233,35,87,126,967
240 DATA 2,122,43,3,24,237,0,0,431
```

BASIC

```
10 REM Sorter Demo by Alan Gibson
20 LOAD "SORT_CODE"CODE 64000
30 DIM T(10): FOR F=1 TO 10: LET
T(F)=INT (RND*255): NEXT F: REM GIVES
10 TEAMS  RANDOM POINTS VALUES
40 DIM T$(10,7): FOR F=1 TO 10: LET
T$(F)="TEAM "+STR$ F: NEXT F: REM
TEAM NAMES
50 PRINT "UNSORTED TEAMS" '
"TEAM","POINTS": FOR F=1 TO 10: PRINT
T$(F),T(F): NEXT F
60 LET ADR=65000: FOR F=1 TO 10:
POKE ADR,T(F): POKE ADR+1,F: LET
ADR=ADR+2: NEXT F: REM PUTS
POINTS AND TEAMS IN THE INPUT AREA
70 POKE 65030,255: REM THIS ISTHE
MAXIMUM NUMBER OF POINTS
POSSIBLE
80 RANDOMIZE USR 64000
90 PAUSE 0: CLS
100 PRINT "SORTED TEAMS"
110 PRINT "TEAM","POINTS"
120 FOR F=65040 TO 65049: PRINT
T$(PEEK F),T(PEEK F): NEXT F
130 PRINT
140 PRINT "DONE!"
150 PRINT
160 PRINT "TO SAVE ROUTINE - "
170 PRINT "SAVE ""NAME"" CODE
START,40"
180 STOP
```

SCREEN SAVER

by Richard Swann

Back (back! Back!) in full effect, Dicky's second contribution of the month is none other than a screen saver utility as found on, quoth Dicky, "posh computers". Just an interjection of mild interest at this point – the equivalent of both Richard's programs this month can be found already built into the ROM of that "posh computer", the SAM Coupé, and it's good to see Dicky acknowledging the SAM's superiority at last! For those not in the know, a such a prog is used to blank the screen out after 'n' minutes, so as to save the TV's phosphor from sustaining a permanent scar due to displaying a static image for too long. To actually use the thing, you first need to work out after how many frames you want the screen to blank out. The value can be anything up to 65535, which works out at about twenty-two minutes, and just to give you a rough working guide, one frame lasts one fiftieth of a second. Using n as the number of frames, POKE 64847, n-(INT(n/256))*256: POKE 64848, INT(n/256): RANDOMIZE USR 64768 and you're away. Two words of warning, though – firstly, don't use interrupts, and secondly, leave all RAM above 64768 free for the routine to use.

LISTING 3

BASIC

```
10 REM Decimal Loader by Cap'n Craig
20 CLEAR 64767: RESTORE 1: LET x=200
30 FOR f=64768 TO 64863 STEP 8
40 LET t=0: FOR g=0 TO 7
50 READ a: POKE f+g,a: LET t=t+a: NEXT g
60 READ a: IF t<>a THEN PRINT
"Checksum Error at line ";x: STOP
70 LET x=x+10: NEXT f
80 PRINT "Data POKEd into memory OK."
90 INPUT "Save to tape? ";s$
100 IF s$="Y" OR s$="y" THEN INPUT
"Filename? ";f$: SAVE f$CODE 64768,96
200 DATA 243,33,0,254,17,1,254,1,803
210 DATA 0,1,54,253,237,176,62,195,978
220 DATA
50,253,253,33,39,253,34,254,1169
230 DATA 253,42,79,253,34,91,253,62,1067
240 DATA
254,237,71,237,94,251,201,243,1588
250 DATA
245,229,213,197,205,142,2,123,1356
260 DATA 60,32,27,42,91,253,43,34,582
270 DATA 91,253,124,181,32,22,33,0,736
280 DATA 88,17,1,88,1,0,3,54,252
290 DATA
0,237,176,175,211,254,33,244,1330
300 DATA
1,34,91,253,193,209,225,241,1247
310 DATA 195,56,0,0,0,0,0,0,251
```

A NEW APPROACH

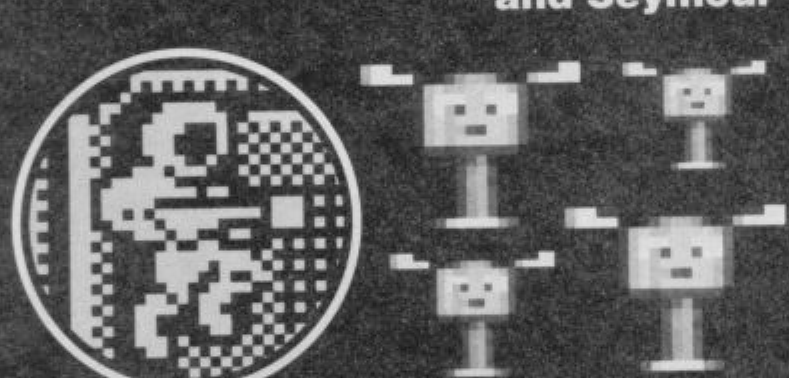
I've made a decision. Good, eh? The decision, basically, is that I want to change the format of Pitstop ever so slightly, so that instead of aimlessly printing any program that looks good, I get to print the programs that you want to see. So what I want you to do is send in suggestions for the types of programs you'd like to see appearing in Pitstop, and then (hopefully) the skilled populace will set to work on your chosen topics. Address your suggestions, as well as your programs of course, to Craig B at Program Pitstop, YS, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 BW. And before I go, I'd better just say that the mailbag is getting rather desolate, so get writing and bask in the adulation of millions! Sort of.

YS hints'n'tips TIPSHOP



Hello! Welcome to this month's startling collection of hints, maps and all thing tippy. We call it Tipshop but, if you'd rather, you can call it something completely different. How about 'Maude', or 'Crunchy Oven Egg'? maybe you'd prefer something a little more exotic, something along the lines of 'das gluckliche Zeitung' or 'andiamo!'

Anyway, whatever you want to call it, the next few pages are dedicated to helping you get through a variety of games. I do hope it's all of some use. If it isn't, why not tear out the pages, roll them up and use them as a telescope? It might not work very well, but it looks darn impressive!

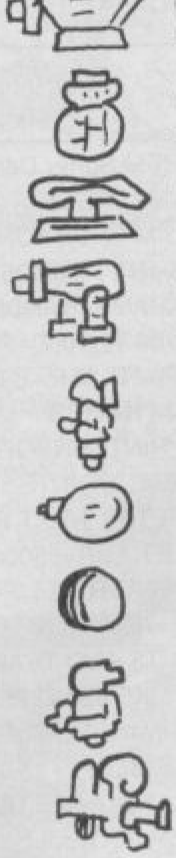


SOLD

Matthew Willis has mapped the first level of this smart covergame.

I have enclosed the following... a map for Level One, what all the baddies do and how to destroy them, what the power ups are, how good the weapons are, some tips and a joke. The joke isn't that great, but at least I made it up.

BADDIES



Cannon-type thing which shoots in either direction. Lob a grenade at it.

Blob thing which moves left and right, as well as up and down. Shoot it three times.

Fast glider which moves left and right very quickly. Shoot it twice or jump over it.

Walker thing which walks left and shoots. Avoid it or throw grenade.

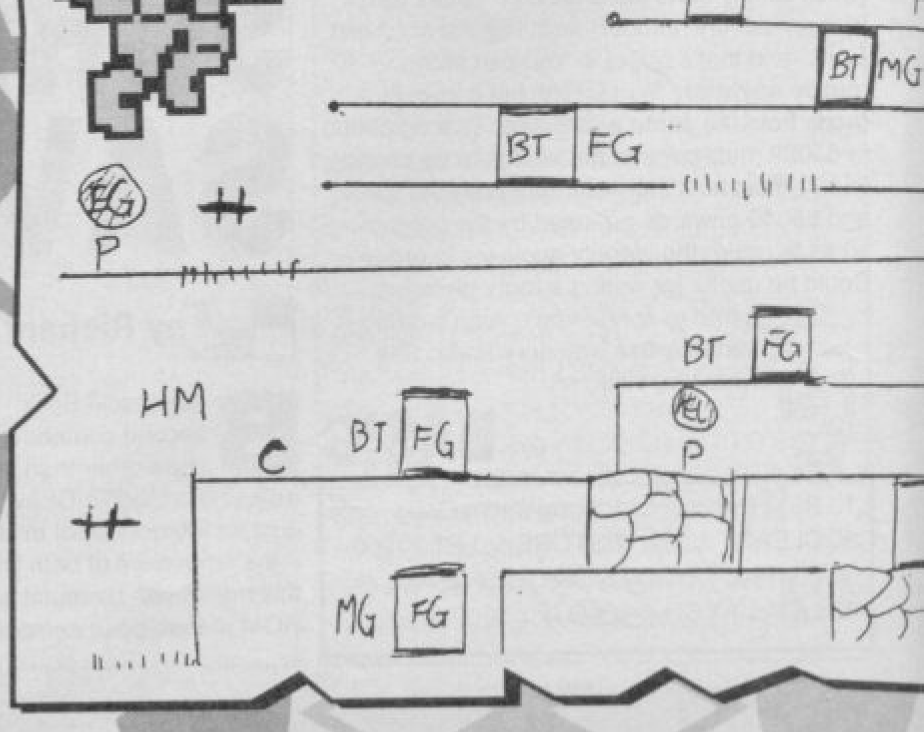
Man with gun, glides left and right and shoots. Shoot him three times.

Melon with gun which moves left just at head level. Jump over it or throw grenade.

Pulsating ball which moves up and down. It can't be destroyed unless you're a superhero.

Second man with gun stands on teleporters. Shoot it five times.

Hover man who homes in towards you. Don't bother trying to kill it.



DIER ONE

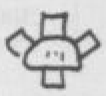
He was going to do the other levels, but found them too time-consuming. Ahh!


Cannon which shoots in an arc. Stand in front of it and shoot it about five times.

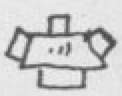

Crawlers move left and right. Don't bother with it unless it's guarding a power up.


Vertical shots move up. Just avoid them.


Headless bird walks left and right and shoots in an arc. Shoot it twice.


Boingy type thing boings left and right. Avoid it.

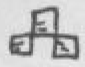

Big cannon turns left or right and shoots. Sometimes walks. Throw grenade or avoid it.


Second boingy thing which boings left and right. Shoot it three times.

POWER UPS


Spikey bomb.


Upgrades your weapon to a three-way shooty bang-stick or a laser, depending on what you had before.


Three extra grenades.


Extra life (not a cuddly toy). Shield with which you can kill anyone in the way.


Extra energy and 250 points.


Smart bomb; clears the screen.

WEAPONS

NORMAL — **NORMAL** Not much good, but better than nothing.

3 WAY — **3-WAY** Quite good, especially for getting things that are lurking above you.

LASER — **LASER** Brilliant! Increases the range of your weapon.

TIPS

- At the end of your go, just before you get killed, fire a grenade. If it doesn't go off on that go, it will go off giving you an extra grenade (but it won't hit a baddie).
- Remember you haven't got loads of time. Instead of spending ages firing at a baddie, just jump over him.
- Use your grenades! However many you've got when you die, you still only get three on your next go. (Even if you've used them all.)

KEY

C/CT = Cannon thing

BT = Blob thing

FG = Fast glider

P = Power up

(circle) = What's in the power up

(M) = Mine

(W) = Weapon upgrade

(EG) = Extra grenades

(EL) = Extra life

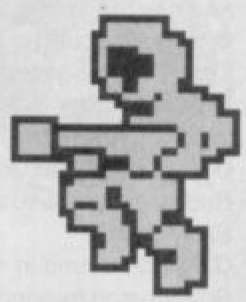
MG = Man with gun

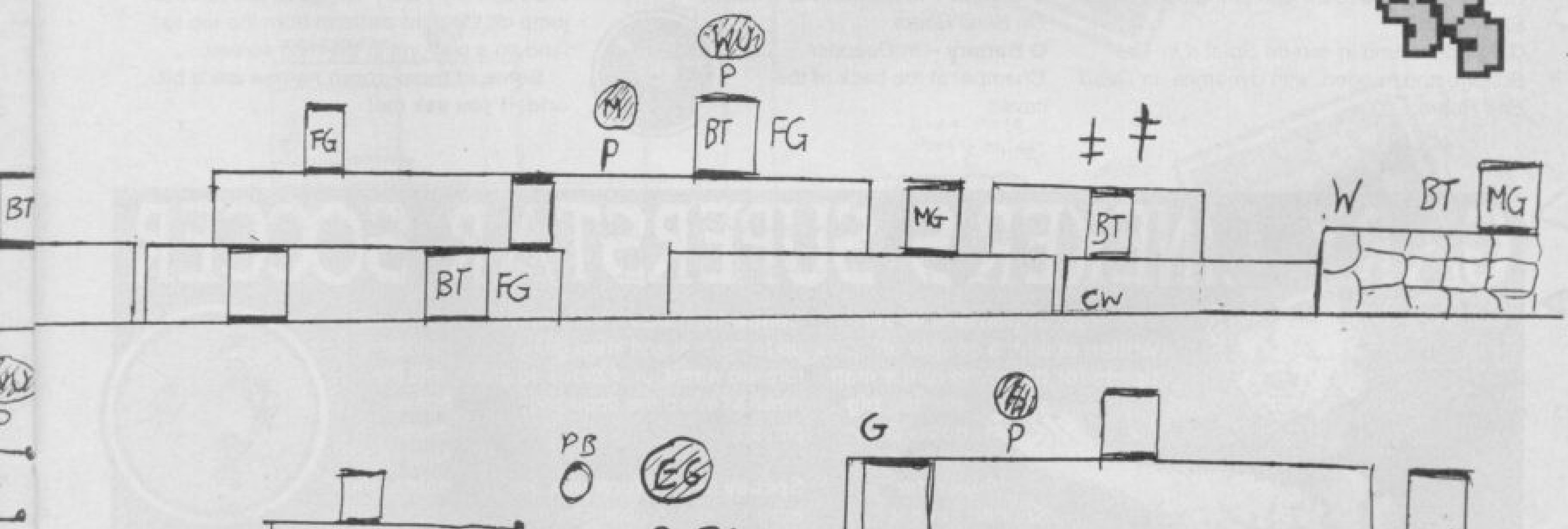
CW = Crawler

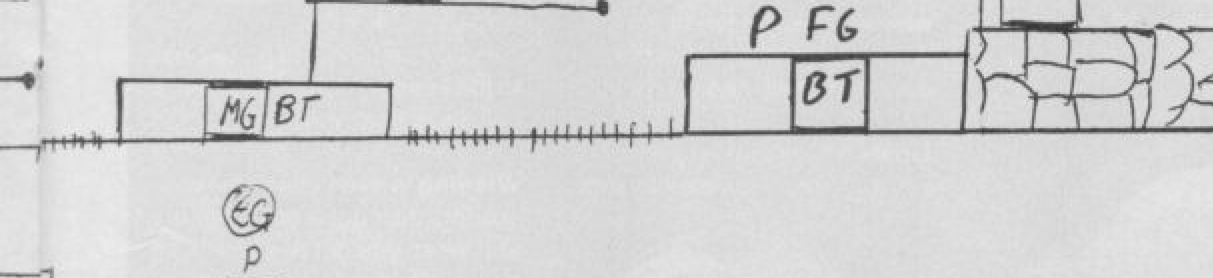
W = Walker

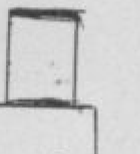
Pulsating ball

HM Hover man







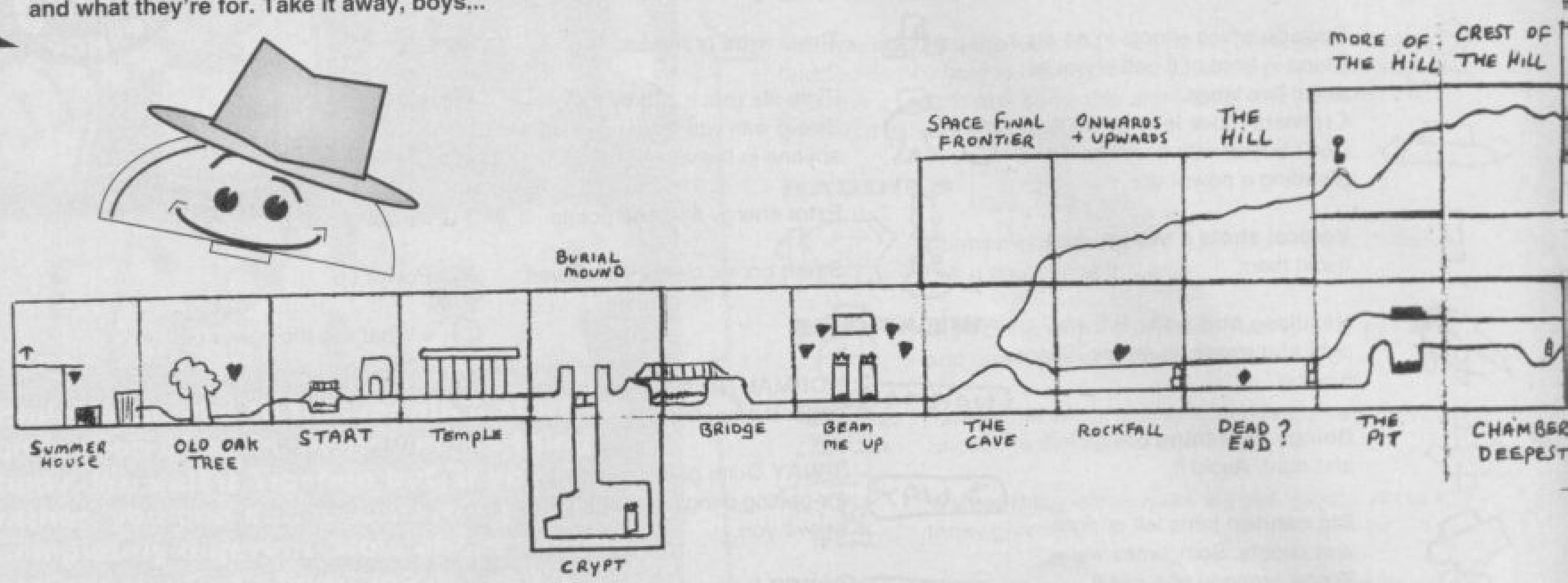


Just to finish, here's my joke...
Q. What do people in the army do when their guns break?
A. They 'soldier' them together!

I thought they just got shot! Thanks for those, Matthew.

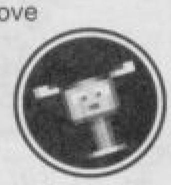
BOING!

Patrick Spencer and **Tony Baitson** have mapped and tipped this SAM game. We'll start off with all the items, where to find them and what they're for. Take it away, boys...



✪ Lift key found in screen *More Of The Hill* and needed for lifts in two places.
✪ Parachute found in screen *More Spooky Floaty Things* and needed to drop into shaft in *The Garden.*
✪ Pickaxe found in screen *Summer House* and needed to open shaft in *The Garden.*
✪ Goggles found in screen *The Very Top Of The Hill* and needed to enter *I'm Blind Room.*
✪ Spade found in screen *Ouch* and needed to open *Burial Mound.*
✪ Dynamite found in screen *The Master Bedroom* and needed, with plunger, in *Dead End Room.*
✪ Plunger found in screen *Splat (Or, The Bottom)* and needed, with dynamite, in *Dead End Room.*
✪ Barrel one found in screen *The Entrance Hall* and needed to cross pit in caves.
✪ Barrel two found in screen *Even More Floaty Things* and needed to cross the pit in the caves.
✪ Hearts found in six different screens and restore air supply to full.
✪ Potion bottles found in twenty different places and you need to collect them all.

Time machine parts
✪ **Crystal** – in the caves.
✪ **Switch** – In teleport room above *I'm Blind Room.*
✪ **Battery** – In *Deepest Chamber* at the back of the caves.



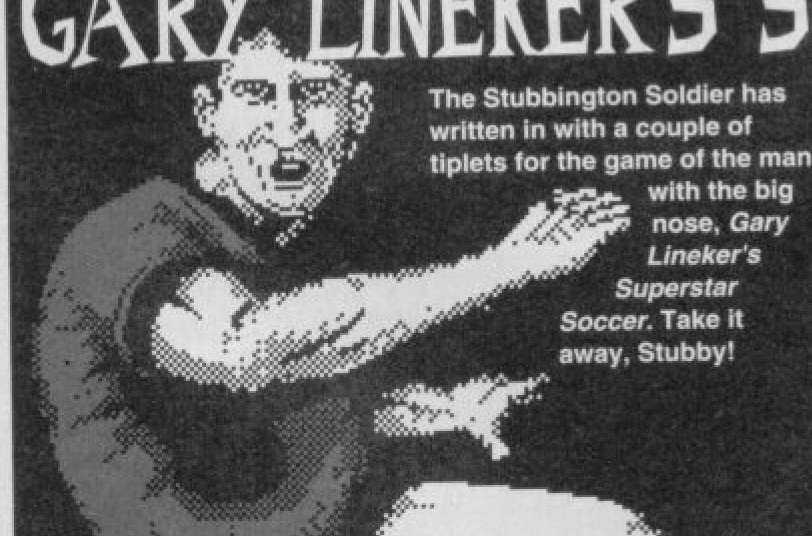
Teleporters
✪ In *Beam Me Up* room – Use left to go to *Front Door,* and right to go to *Bridge To Nowhere.*
✪ In *The Teleporter* room – Use to go to *Summer House.*
✪ In *The Crypt* – Use to go to *Strange.*

After collecting all three parts of the time machine and all twenty potions, return to start and the time machine will appear. Enter this and you have finished the game.

Before we go, just a note – In the screen titled *Spooky Floaty Things 3,* you have to jump off the third platform from the top to land on a platform in the next screen.

Some of those room names are a bit odd, if you ask me!

GARY LINEKER'S SUPERSTAR SOCCER



The Stubbington Soldier has written in with a couple of tiplets for the game of the man with the big nose, *Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer.* Take it away, Stubby!

Centre-forwards should move up to the ball and keep going forward with it. Just move up and down to avoid the opposing players.

Speccy centre-forwards are easy to beat. As soon as the whistle blows, move to the ball. At the last minute move down, collect the ball, and you're off!

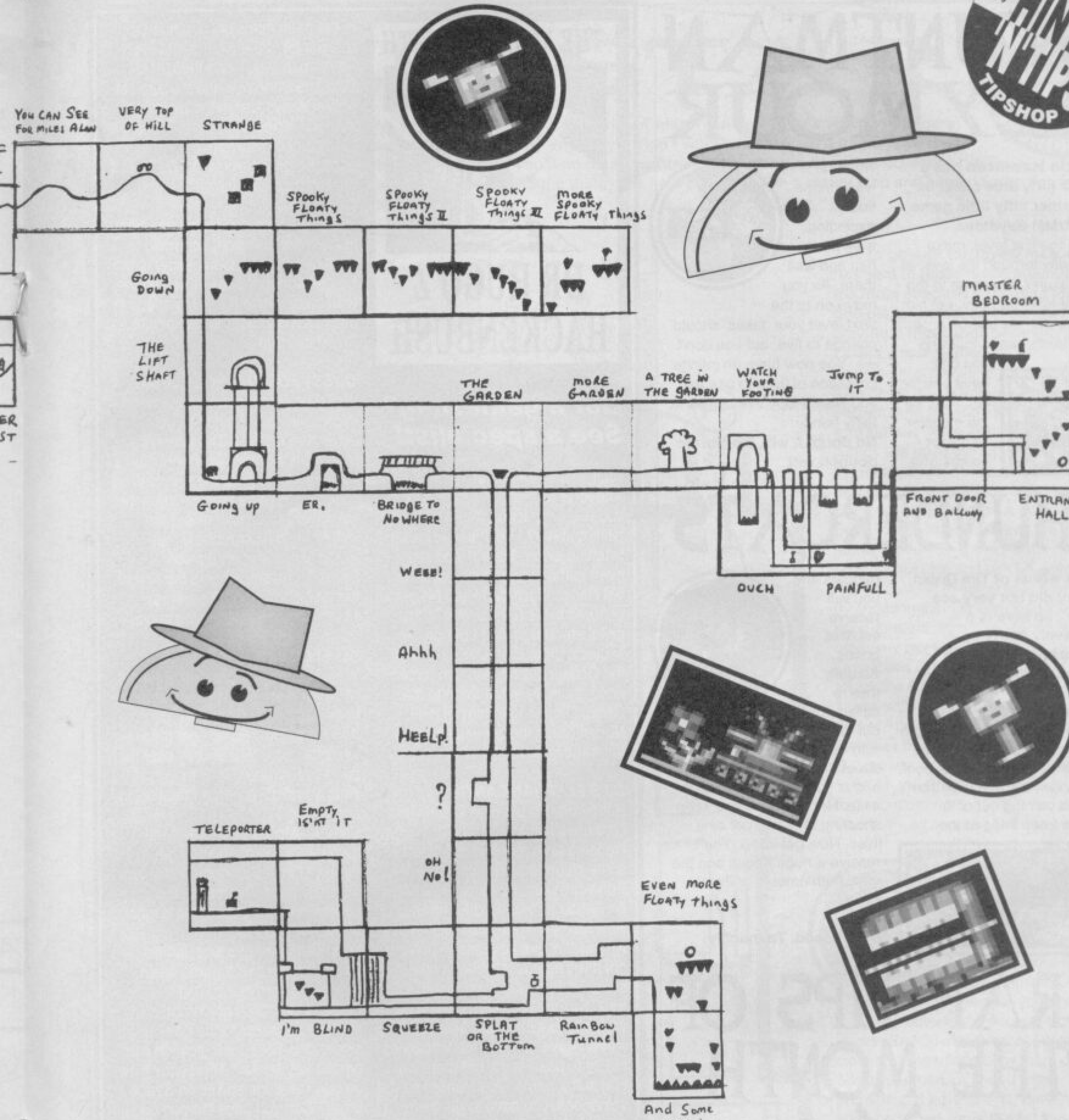
Goals are easy-peasy to score. When you're a couple of yards out, move randomly until the goalie dives. Now dribble the ball around him and walk it in. Just be careful not to go to close to the keeper, or he'll grab the ball away from you.

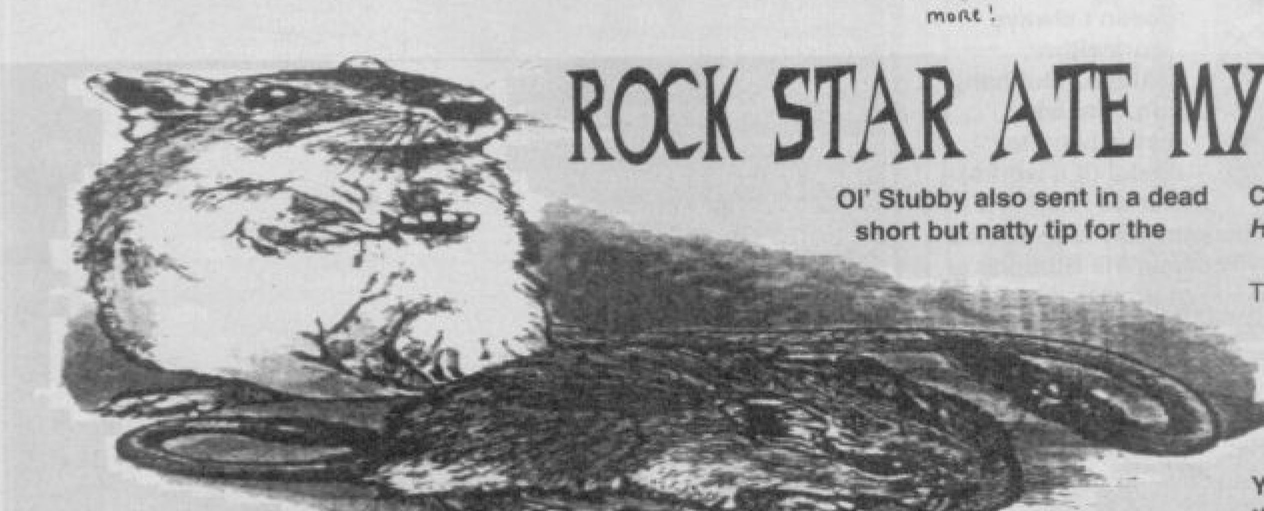




Winning is even easier than scoring. Just get a goal ahead, and when you get a goal kick or a throw-in, don't take it. The clock will continue ticking, so wait until the time runs out.

Sounds a bit unsporting to me, but what the hey, eh?





ROCK STAR ATE MY HAMSTER

Ol' Stubby also sent in a dead short but natty tip for the Codies' *Rock Star Ate My Hamster*. So, erm, here it is.

To get maximum revenue, go to stadiums and charge a tenner.

Smart advice, and remember, never let a rock star near your furry pets. You just don't know what they'll get up to.

STUNTMAN SEYMOUR

Martin Hamilton has a rather nifty little cheat for the rather nifty little game *Stuntman Seymour*.

On the first level, make your way through the level as normal until you come to the end-of-level bad guy. Let him hit you with his bombs until your 'takes' reads four and you only have one life left. Now kill the monster with your bombs and





when he is lying on the floor exploding, walk on to him and wait there. As you move on to the next level your 'takes' should change to five, but you don't die. You now have an infinite collection of lives to use as you wish. Hope this comes in fairly handy.

No doubt it will, Martin. No doubt it will.

THUNDERCATS

In the words of Tim Cryan, 'a very old but very ace game', so here is a massively crafty tip courtesy of, erm, Tim Cryan. Basically.

On the third level – the one where you have to save Tigra – stand still just behind the first block after the small pool. You know, the one with the eyeball coming out of it.

Now keep firing at the baddies and you will receive endless boxes. Actually, they're called boxes but they look more like clouds with eyes. Anyway, if you shoot them, you'll receive bonus items, one of which is a life. Hang around and keep shooting until you get nine lives. Now get killed. You'll receive a huge bonus and the maximum amount of lives. Brill eh?

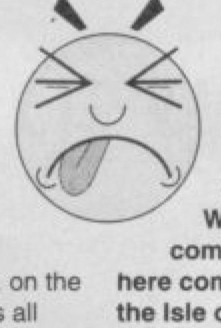




Brill indeed. Ta muchly.

CRAP TIPS OF THE MONTH

Yes! We've got two of 'em this month. First of all, from Ryan Cooper in Wolverhampton, comes this sparkling piece of crap advice.



On *Target; Renegade*, on the high score table, press all over the keyboard and the name should go over the score. Now press ENTER and you'll start where you died, but with infinite lives! This doesn't always work.

Alternatively, you could try shouting at the Speccy, 'Give me infinite lives.' This doesn't always work either. (Ahem.) But hang on, that was actually quite useful (it it works). What we need is a completely crap tip. Ad here comes Will Gibbons of the Isle of Wight.

I've got a fab tip for adventure players to make their games last longer. Play them with a Sinclair joystick! NB: this only works if the adventure understands words like '6667879' and '0989806'.

Will, you're a genius. I'll suggest it to Tim at once.

THE YS CLINIC WITH DR HUGO Z HACKENBUSH



Got a gamesnag? See a specialist!

Well, this is a fine state of affairs. And after all I've done for the lot of you. It's disgraceful. What am I talking about? I don't know, I wasn't listening either. Ha ha! You see – even in the face of such hardship, old Hackenbush can keep his sense of humour. Yes, folks, due to the pitiful amount of mail I get on subjects other than Drizzly and all the Codies puzzle clan, I'm forced, once again, to admit them to the Clinic. Oh, the ignominy of it all. Nurse! Fetch the tissues and hike the rates by a couple of per cent.

CJ'S ELEPHANT ANTICS

But before we usher in Drizzly and co, here's a coincidentally Codemasters game in dire need of some clearing up. Enter, stage left, Edward Sykes. Edward, eh? I knew him when he was Eddie The Boy. How times change. Just look at this wristwatch. But I digress. 'You've got it wrong again.' What a fine, sensitive opening. 'Last month's tip for *CJ's Elephant Antics* was a bit vague to say the least. You do indeed have to bomb the volcanoes madly to pass them, but there's a bug in the game. To actually find the volcanoes, you have to go down through the level. What the unfortunate Darren M has done is get stuck in the scrolling at the top right of the map. He should just head downwards from the start.' There you have it Darren – just descend to Edward's level and you should be fine. Ha ha! No one's upper lip was ever stiffer.

MEGABUCKS

But to return to Edward. 'Way back in the June 1992 issue, Daz Ellis was snagged on this way-way-back puzzler. What, he mused, do you do in the picture, safe-cracking and chemistry sections? Here, at last, are the answers. In the picture room in the main mansion, you need to use the bit of the picture and the paintbrush. You'll find them in the Dog and Bone pub and the tunnels respectively. Also in the main mansion is the safe room. There's a safe cracker in the church vault. To pass the guardian robot, you'll need the robot control, which is found in the tunnels.

'In the chemistry room (yup, also in the main mansion) you need to complete the chemistry experiment. So dash off to the tower behind the lead screen (use the X-ray specs to pass this) and get the equipment. And that's that.'

QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL

Well, I've sent that Kemp fellow an impressive letter, but I still get adventure queries. The latest is from Mark Barwell, who wants to know how you pass the Knight Who Says Nic. He has an idea it may be something to do with giving the Knight the pink shrubbery, but would like an expert opinion. Barwell, you should give the Knight the pink shrubbery. Please pay Nurse Brittenhouse as you leave.

AU SECOURS

Well, I suppose there's no putting it off any longer. Nurse! Bring in those poor, lost souls. Gently, gently.

A O Neill: "How do you get the key which is in the tree directly over the pond in *Seymour Goes to Hollywood*? Every time I try, I fall in and drown."

Stephen McGreal: "In the same game, how exactly do you get through Flash Boredom? What are the body parts, the mallet, the bouncy ball, the potion, the dagger and the lollipop for?"

Leon Markham-Lee and James Henry: "In the same game again, how do you cross the road?"

Steven Hunt: "In a game not-entirely-dissimilar-to-the-one-previously-mentioned, how do you get the key on Isn't This High? How do you avoid the spikes on Space Base? Can you pass the dog on Frank Einstein?"

Richard Spandley: "How do you make the kite in *Spellbound Dizzy*? I have all the parts."

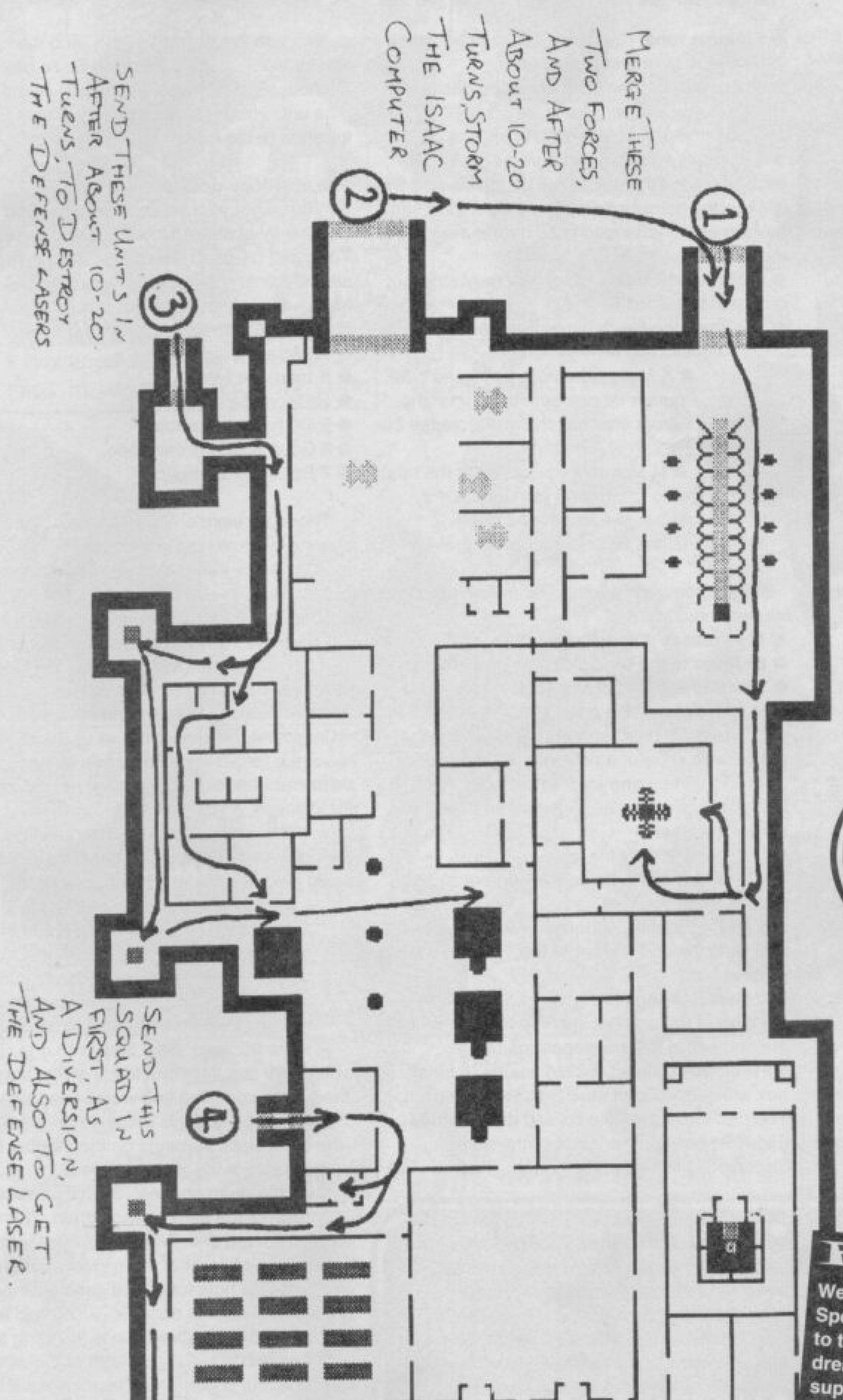
Kevin Burt: "I can't pass the Broken Bridge in *Fantasy World Dizzy*."

Before I go, the answer to Secret Word Number Four. Nobody got it right, but Edward Sykes was the least wrong with his guess of 'dromedary'. The answer was, of course, 'dziggetai'. Send all your snags and solutions to me, Dr Hackenbush, at the YS Clinic, care of the usual address. Nurse! Chase that patient off the examination couch. I need a nap.

REBELSTAR

YS HINTS 'N' TIPS TIPSHOP

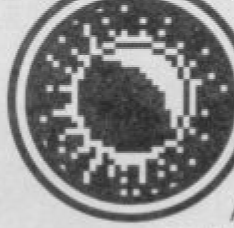
What a game, eh? Number two in the YS Top 100, personal favourite of Alan Titchmarsh (TV's Mr Green-fingers) and a fun-packed romp for all the family. (Or something.) Erm, pity it didn't work when we put it on the tape then, isn't it? Ahem. Anyway, if you're a big *Rebelstar* fan, you'll no doubt be furiously shaking the hand of LD Jones (yes, the very chap who informed us who owned the rights to the thing) cos he's come up with a marvy map and some terrific tips for this gorgeous game. Alliteration, eh? I love it.



And to go with the lovely map, LD has sent in these tips containing the most effective strategies for the one-player game, collated after playing it thousands of times. Lawks a mussy me!

Over the first couple of turns arm your men and break in through airlocks one (top left) and two (bottom left) using light sabres. Move all the units from airlock two up to the top, to join with the forces by airlock one. Blast your way through airlock four, using the Combat Droid, to cause a diversion. Send the Combat Droid into the 'Droid Mend' module on the right. It will now be indestructible and can kill anyone foolish enough to come near it, either by shooting them or attacking them hand-to-hand. Provided you do not open any more airlocks, the Operatives will now swarm down and attack the Raiders at the bottom-right. These units should take out the defence laser on the right, then make their way up to ISAAC, killing as many Operatives as possible on the way.

When the Operatives have all gone to the bottom-right, send in the rest of your men, all at once. The team at airlock three should work their way along the bottom, to shoot the two remaining defence lasers, while the team at airlock one tear across the top.



Assemble your men outside the security doors above ISAAC, with Combat Droids closest to them, and blow them open. Send your men in, armed with phasers and laser pistols. Blast everybody and shoot ISAAC to reveal the amazing end sequence.

Phew! Thanky danky, LD. May your Rebelstar Raiders never wither under fire (or something).

BUNTY!

Well, that's the Tipshop for this month, Spec-chums. Now 'tis time for little birds to tuck their heads under their wings and dream of crunchy cockroaches. And I suppose I should be going home too! Send all your maps, tips, cheats and hints to me, Linda B, at the YS Tipshop, Your Sinclair, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. Bye bye baby, baby bye bye!

EXTRA

BEAUT BOX



MUSIC SYNTH 48K

Simon Tillson

Load in 48K mode

PD UTILITY

Well, blimey. Three channel music on a 48K Speccy. Ol' Simon Tillson has come up with a complete stonker that's spookily easy to use and (and! And!) which produces stand-alone tunes that can be freely used in your own progs as long as you credit Simon somewhere along the line. It's like a *Soundtracker* of your very own (sort of).

To help you fiddle around with *Music Synth*, we've saved a demo tune along with the main program. It's called 'Cool' and acoustically-talented peeps will recognise it as the title track to *Ano Gaia*. When you load *Music Synth*, you're given the chance to back it up (at normal speed) to tape. As all the file-handling is done in BASIC, it's dead easy to break into the prog and change the appropriate lines so it all works from disk. But back to the copy option – when you back up the prog, the demo tune is not saved. This has to be done from within the program itself. Just thought we'd let you know. Now – dash down to the Basics box for the interesting stuff.

The editor

Or, the bits you push to write your tune. First we'll look at the options at the top of the screen.

- **1. Play tune** Erm, plays the tune.
- **2. Erase tune** Erases all tune data and changes in envelope, but does not affect the scale settings or the envelopes.
- **3. Main menu** Returns to the main menu.
- **4. Order bar** Provided the bar you are currently editing is legal (that is, it has sixteen sixteenth notes exactly) this option will space the notes and rests out in their correct places. It has no effect on channel three.
- **5. Name tune** The name will be used when you save data or a compiled tune.
- **6. Envelopes** See 'The envelope designer'.

And now the actual tune-writing options.

- **T** Toggles the time signature between 3/4 and 4/4 time. All ordering will be mixed up if this is changed halfway through writing a tune, but as long as it is changed back before anything is moved, all will be okay.
- **Q** Moves the Beat Cursor (the grey stripe) one beat to the left.
- **W** Moves the Beat Cursor one beat to the right.



- **K** Moves the note under the beat cursor up one semitone. If on the drum channel, this will increase the length of the drum.
- **M** Moves the note under the beat cursor down one semitone. Or decreases the length of a drum.
- **C** Moves the Beat Cursor on to the next channel.
- **Y** Decreases the tempo (shown in the top right hand corner).
- **U** Increases the tempo.
- **8** Moves to the bar before the present one.
- **9** Moves to the next bar. (120 in total).
- **D** Dots or undots a note.
- **S** Sharpens or un-sharpens notes.
- **P** Allows entry of a note where the Beat Cursor is. Press **one** for a whole note, **two** for a half, **four** for a quarter, **eight** for an eighth or **six** for a sixteenth.
- **R** As with P, only for rests.
- **F** Enters a drum. Press the number of the envelope you require.
- **X** Erases a note, restores a drum.
- **E** Sets the end marker to the present bar.
- **V** Sets a change in envelope at the start of the present bar. Press the number of the envelope required.
- **H** Allows re-tuning of note values. A small box with a section of stave in it will appear. You can move the note up and down with **M** and **K** as before. The value of the note displayed is shown at the bottom. This can be altered with the **Q** and **W** keys, and the note can be sharpened by pressing **S**. To hear how the note sounds, press **T**. This will sound the note until you press another key. Press ENTER to return to the Editor.

The envelope designer

So you've got your notes. Now you need some clever way of making them sound interesting. You need (ta-daa!) envelopes. This option allows you to design the envelopes used for the tune, and also the drum sounds.

- **Q** Move cursor left.
- **W** Move cursor right.
- **K** Increase value.
- **M** Decrease value.
- **9** Go to next envelope.
- **8** Go to previous envelope.
- **1** Return to the Editor.

There are eight envelopes which you can use as tone or drum type envelopes, but with a tone type envelope you must keep the volume in the green area. That is, the values must be fifteen or less.

Don't worry about rest envelopes for drums. The computer uses a blank envelope for these (number nine) and calculates them automatically. When using an envelope as a drum sound, the higher the values you use, the lower the frequency of the white noise, so a bass sound would be higher on the graph than, for instance, a snare.

You will probably find the tempo a little (actually a lot!) too fast. To get around this, you could increase the tempo (remember the higher the number, the slower the tempo. Paradoxes, eh?). But if you find there aren't enough bars available, you could increase the tempo enormously and use quavers instead of crotchets, minims instead of semibreves and so on, in order to allow two bars to be fitted into one. This would give you 240 bars to play with, but when the tune is compiled you would use twice as much memory. This is because the length of the code block depends on the number of notes used in the tune, you see.



On the drum channel, a solid black unit represents the start of each drum. The number printed under it is the number of the envelope used for that drum. The solid unit is one sixteenth note long, and each outlined unit is another sixteenth note. So, if you had a drum sound with three outlined units following the solid one, the equivalent length of that sound would be four sixteenth notes, or a crotchet.

Thanks very much, Simon Tillson. As we said before, the best way to learn about *Music Synth* is to play around with the demo tune provided. Happy composing! (Or something.)

Basics and the main menu

Music Synth is a three-channel sound synthesiser for the 48K Speccy. Tunes are written using an ordinary stave for channels one and two, which are tone channels, and a percussion line for channel three, as found on drum machines. On loading, you'll see the main menu screen. Here's what each of the options means.

- **1. Editor** This is where the tune gets written. See 'The editor' (up there a tad).
- **2. Load data** This will load in a previously saved (uncompiled) tune, along with its scale, envelopes and envelope changes.
- **3. Save data** Saves the (uncompiled) tune, envelopes and everything else. The filename used is the name you have given the tune (erm, with the 'name' option).
- **4. Compile** Compiles tune data into a code block and saves it. The filename used etc etc. Note the info for future reference.
- **5. Exit** Returns you to BASIC. From here you can easily adapt the prog to use disks.


ERNIE
THE
PSYCHOTIC
MADMAN
'AND THE VENGEANCE OF THE BROTHERHOOD'
(CONTINUED)
BY PHIL
LAST MONTH WE LEFT YOU WITH Y.S. FACING ANIHILATION AND DIRE TOILET TROUBLES...
HA-HA! TIME TO DIE, YOU INFIDEL TYPE PERSONS
OH NO! LINDA! WHAT WILL WE DO?
SORRY! I'M OFF TO EDIT AMSTRAD ACTION! TA-TA!
EXIT
OH NO! (AGAIN) WITH LINDA UNABLE TO EDIT BOTH MAGS, WE'RE DOOMED FOR SURE! - WHERE'S A PSYCHOPATH WHEN YOU NEED ONE?
5 MINUTES BEFORE, A LONE PIECE OF DEBRIS MAKES ITS WAY, HURTLED ACROSS THE COUNTRY
WHIZZZZZZ!
BATH
.... STRAIGHT THROUGH ERNIE'S FRONT WINDOW....
SMASH!
WHAM!
SPLAT!
YOUR SINCLAIR
HMM. IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, THIS RATHER LOOKS LIKE A PIECE OF DEBRIS FROM FUTURE PUBLISHING, BEING ACTIVELY DESTROYED BY A 60FT HIGH MONSTER PORCUPINE. I MUST MAKE HASTE IMMEDIATELY.
OH NO!! SAD PLOT! SAD PLOT!
PRETTY DAMN SOON....
HA! SO, IT IS OUR MORTAL ENEMY COME TO HELP HIS FRIENDS IN A TIME OF NEED! HA! PREPARE TO DIE FOOLISH SCUM!
NOW, MIGHTY LETHARGIC PORCUPINE! DESTROY THE...EH?
BOOOM! BOOOM! BOOOM! BOOOM! BOOOM!
ACME PSYCHOPATHIC INVENTIONS
CRIKEY! IT'S A 200 FT HIGH GIGANTIC DIZZY! LAWKS! LET'S SCARPER!
TOO LATE!
THUD!
BANK!
CRUNCH!
SMASH!
SMAK!
WHAM!
HURRAH! ERNIE HAS SAVED THE DAY! LET'S ALL HAVE A NICE CUP OF TEA! YAY!
HURRAH! HURRAH! YAY! YEE-HA! WHOOPEE!
NEVER MIND BOSS, I HEAR JEHOVA'S WITNESSES WANT MORE RECRUITS
SHUT UP!!
SORRY.

Got a problem? Get it solved! With
SIMON COOKE
SPEC TEC *Junior*



With Number One unmasked and The Village turned into a theme park, Simon gets back to normal. Well, sort of. Er, not at all, in fact.

Hello my little Spec-chums. Welcome to my humble Belgian detective agency. Don't mind Hastings – he's just sleeping. *(Ohhh... who are you? What the devil have you done with Poirot? Hastings)*. Hastings my dear chap – what a nasty bee sting you have there! Here, let me get some witch-hazel on that... (Sound of heavy blow.)

I've been asked to hold the fort for Poirot while he goes on holiday to rest his little grey cells. (Sound of muffled French curses from nearby cupboard.) Er, damn this plumbing. Anyway, I've already got a case – I have to find out why Linda has decided to leave YS. C'est un pièce de gâteau, mes petits. Rats, my moustache keeps falling off. Anyone got a tube of Copydex?

CRACKED SPECIAL!

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION SOLVED

As an extra-special treat this month, here are three pages of pure Cracked. I've had so many hints and tips, and I feel so bad about chucking them away, that I just had to print as many as I possibly can in this space. In fact, I'm not even going to put little comments at the end of the letters (unless they really need 'em).

ESCAPE FROM ALKATRAZ

I was having a good old hack attack *(Y'what? Si)* on the *Alkatraz* loading routine, when I found this line in the BASIC:

```
10 ALKATRAZ PROTECTION SYSTEM
```

I then set about doing this type of line for my programs to replace the usual REM statement. This is what I did:

```
20 LET A$="YS IS CRAP! (in a funky skillo sort of way)"
30 FOR F=1 TO LEN A$
40 POKE F+23759,CODE A$(F)
50 NEXT F
```

Now type in line 10 as a load of spaces and RUN. Delete lines 20-50 to leave the message line. You can change the message in A$ to whatever you like. *(But you need to fill line ten with at least as many spaces as there are letters in your message. Si)*

The Mad Hacker,
Worcester Park, Surrey



*Nice one, Mad. Only thing is, if you've got an Interface One you'll need to change the 23759 in line 40 to whatever number you get when you type this: PRINT 4+(PEEK 23635+256*PEEK 23636). Also, for SAM owners, here's a way of doing the same thing for REM statements...*

```
60000 DEF PROC remarker fst,stp: REM By Cookie '93
60001 CLS#: MODE 3: CSIZE 8,8: INPUT LINE A$
60002 IF A$="STOP" THEN ENDPROC: REM You must type STOP in caps!
60003 KEYIN STR$ fst+" REM "+STRING$ (10,CHR$ 12)+A$
60004 LET fst=fst+stp
60005 GOTO 60001
```

This one works by creating REMs which have a string of delete codes straight after them in the line – this removes both the REM statement and the line number, leaving only your text on the screen. To use it just type 'remarker' followed by the starting line for your REM and the step between lines. Then type in your text (STOP exits the procedure). You can use any control codes you like, but it's not a good idea to go over the end of the line. **Si.**

ARTISTIC LICENCE

Here are a few tips for printing pictures made using *The Artist 2* to an Epson compatible printer. (1) If you find that the paper isn't moving after printing each line of graphics, try setting dip switch DS2-2 to ON. (2) In the storage menu, the options Grey Dump L and Large Dump are the wrong way round, as are Grey Dump S and Small Dump. So to do one of these, select the other, and vice versa. (3) Don't use the Large Dump or Grey Dump L options on A4 or tractor feed paper, as they'll go off the edge and print on the paper roller. For large dumps, use A3 paper or larger. (4) For an extra small dump, go to Pagemaker and clear anything that's already there (option 3). Then select option 2 and press M. Select option 8 to print out the picture.

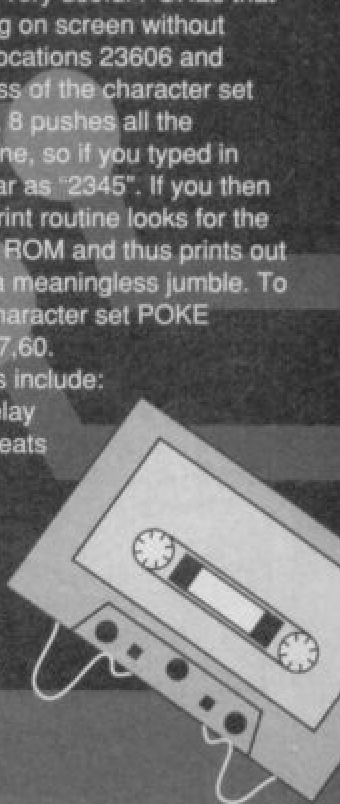
You can also change where your picture is printed on the paper by adjusting the rows and columns after selecting option 2 (using keys Q, S, I and O). I hope this helps anyone who's had printer probs, as *The Artist 2* is not a very user-friendly program.

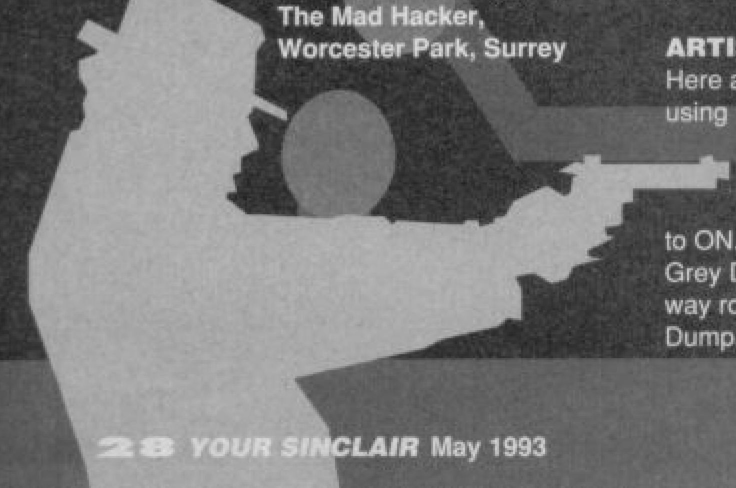
Kevin Thornberry,
Lancaster

POKEY POKEY

I've found a couple of very useful POKEs that can muddle everything on screen without losing the program. Locations 23606 and 23607 hold the address of the character set bitmap. POKE 23606, 8 pushes all the characters along by one, so if you typed in "1234", it would appear as "2345". If you then POKE 23607, 0 the print routine looks for the font at the start of the ROM and thus prints out all the characters as a meaningless jumble. To recover the original character set POKE 23606,0: POKE 23607,60.

More useful POKEs include: POKE 23561, time delay before a key auto-repeats (1-255) and POKE 23562, time in between repeats (1-255). For the +3 it is often useful to change the start line and increment for the





Renumber command. To do this, type in this line, GOTO 9998, enter your starting line and step size, then press EDIT and select the Renumber option.

```
9998 INPUT "Start line:";sl: INPUT "Step size:";ss LET hs1=INT (s1/256): LET hss=INT (ss/256): POKE 23413, sl-256*hsl: POKE 23414,ss-256*hss: POKE 23416,hss
```

Also, if an absolute DRAW is required *(ie to a certain coordinate on-screen. Si)*, enter the command DRAW x-PEEK 23677, y-PEEK 23678. X and y are, of course, the co-ordinates of the pixel you want to draw to. *(Of course. Si)*

Chris Taylor
Ulverston, Cumbria

MICRO DRIVIN'

Just thought I'd write and share a little tip for Microdrive users. Namely, how to erase a program without re-formatting. You need to enter three commands (in this example, the file is called 'filenamex').

ERASE "M";1;"filenamex1": ERASE "M";1;"filenamex2": ERASE "M";1;"filenamex3"

There needs to be a total of ten characters between the quotes, including the program name and number.

Roy Williamson
Kirkdale, Liverpool

Handy little tip there – not too sure why you need to wipe the file three times though (but then again, I don't own a Microdrive). **Si.**

TUNES 'N' TESTS

To access the +3 test mode, hold down RESET and BREAK, then let go of RESET, so that the test card appears. Now press down Q, A, Z, P, L and M at once for the test program (if you have a +3, don't leave your disk in the drive, as it might be corrupted). For the sound to light program, hold down E, A and U when the test-card is displayed, and play a tape in your tape deck. To return from the test card to the main menu, hold down V and B.

Oh, and while I'm on the subject of 128K machines, to play a one channel track (ie sound on one channel only) you need a program such as this:

```
10 LET control=65533: LET info=49149
20 OUT control,7: OUT info, 62
30 OUT control,1: OUT info, 20
40 OUT control,8: OUT info, 14
```

To stop the sound, enter OUT info, 0.

And! If you want to use the RAM drive on a +3, +2, +2A or +2B, all you need to do is type SAVE !"filename" to save, and LOAD !"filename" to get it back. CAT ! will read the directory, and ERASE !"filename" will wipe a file too. Happy programming.

Hayden Yale
Crewe, Cheshire

USR FRIENDLY

Being a curious person *(I'm sure it shouldn't read like that. Si)* I've explored the Spectrum ROM and found some useful machine code routines that I'd like to share. LET L=USR 3582 scrolls the screen up by one character line. LET L=USR 5534 puts a 128K Speccy in 48K mode. LET L=USR 4580 NEWs from 48K BASIC. LET L=USR 4185 lists the BASIC program in memory.

Leighton Sheppard
Gunthorpe, Peterborough

TASWORD +3 TOO

Here are some simple instructions to convert *Tasword 2* for use on a +3. (1) Load in your original *Tasword 2* tape using the tape loader option on the startup menu. (2) Exit to BASIC using option B. (3) Alter line 710 to read 710 SAVE A$+".DAT" CODE 54784,10751: GOSUB 900
(4) Alter line 15 so that the load command reads "Tasword.DAT". (5) Delete line 780. (6) Change line 1050 to just GOTO 20. (7) Type RUN and select 'SAVE Tasword' from the main menu to save the altered version to disk. Congrats! You now own a customised version of *Tasword 2*.

Dan 'The Man' Sohofield
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire

GAC HACK STACK

I've found some things out about the *Graphic Adventure Creator* which you didn't put in the instructions. These involve the messages. Most people using *GAC* will load the Quickstart file which does most of the hard stuff for you. However, people not using it and testing their games will have an error message appearing saying 'Message Not Found'. This is because messages 240 and upwards are for storing the error messages only. So here are the messages you need to have, along with where you need to put them:

Number	Type of Message
240	What now?
241	You can't do that
242	Didn't understand any of that
243	Press any key
244	Quit game? (Y/N)
245	Object already held
246	Object not held
247	Object not in room
248	Carrying too much
249	Your score was...
250	...and you took... (number of moves)
251	Not sure of use
252	Not sure of use
253	You can also see:
254	OK
255	Normally put as "moves"

Also, counter zero holds your score.

Marcus Dyer
Clevedon, Avon

DISC DRIVIN'

Regarding Mark Delaney's plea for info about connecting a 3" drive to a +3. The disc B socket is laid out in this manner:

All even pins (2-34), and pin 31: GND
1: Ready
3: Side one select
5: Read data
7: Write protect
9: Track zero detect
11:Write gate detect
13: Write gate
15: Step
17: Direction select (for Step)
19: Motor On
21: Not used
23: Drive select 1
25: Not used
27: Index hole detect
29: Not used
33: Not used

The diagram will explain which pin is which.



Roland Richardson
Redditch, Worcs

I'm sure there should be a +5V line on there somewhere, but that's probably just me. **Si.**

SPLIT PERSONALITY

I, like many other +2A users who upgraded from the humble 48K Speccy, will have had a Multiface One with Romantic Robot's *Genie Disassembler*, but found that it will not run on the Multiface 3. Well, with a bit of careful soldering and some short lengths of wire, the MF1 can be made to run on the +2A. Here's how.

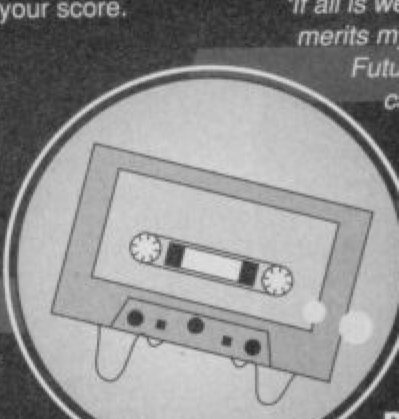


Looking down on the edge connector of the MF1 and counting from the left, find pin four (bottom row) and pin fourteen (bottom row). Solder one end of the wire to pin four and the other to pin fourteen (bottom). Next, again counting from the left, find pin 24 (bottom) (fourth from right) and pin seven (upper). Connect these two pins, making sure that no other pins are connected at this time.

If all is well, the MF 1 should now work when the +2A is in 48K mode.

Ken Sanders
Malvern, Worcs

'If all is well', eh? This is definitely one that merits my serious hat. Spec Tec Jr, YS, Future Publishing and anyone else you care to name can accept no responsibility for any damages incurred to either your hardware or yourself due to making this alteration. This info is supplied in good faith as being correct, so if it's wrong, sorry, but that's the way it goes. Also, don't try this unless your guarantee has run out! **Si.**



PRETTY AS A PICTURE

Here's a much tidier and far shorter routine to avoid messing up a loading screen with filenames. The beauty of this routine is that it simply fools the Speccy into trying to write the info to an area other than the screen. The line is LOAD "" SCREEN$: POKE

23739,82: POKE 23740,0: LOAD "whatever"

CLS restores normality, so use the POKEs straight after the LOAD "" SCREEN$ to avoid problems. Also bear this in mind if you have trouble with PRINT in a BASIC program after loading. If Interface One system variables have been initialised, add 58 to each address. However, this is rather unlikely if you're loading from tape.

Another useful POKE saves having to press a key for a SAVE – or it lets the programmer substitute a different message. Enter this line.

```
9990 SAVE "BASIC_PROG" LINE 1: PRINT "Make a note of the Tape Counter Reading, then start the tape and press a key....": POKE 23736,181: SAVE "M_CODE" CODE x,y
```

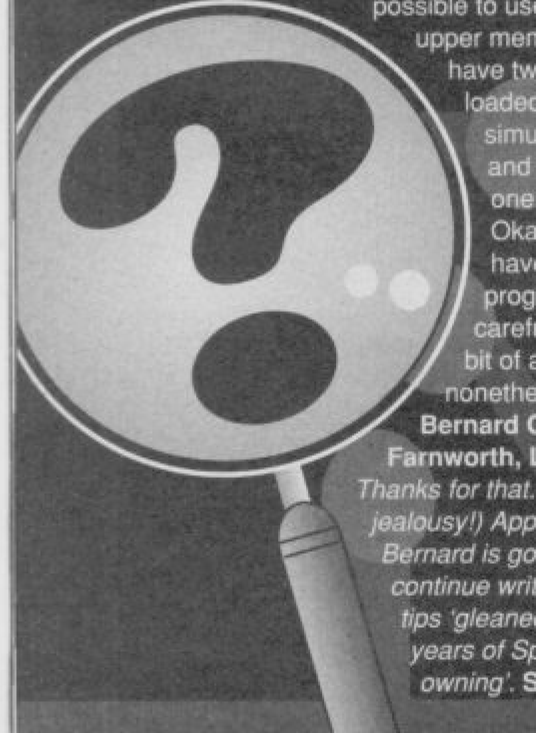


The POKE and SAVE commands must be on the same line, otherwise it doesn't work. The same Interface One rule applies here also.

Did you know that if you've got a BASIC program that you can't MERGE, you can often make a 'dummy header' to use? What you do is LOAD "" as usual, but as soon as the header has loaded (the bleeeeee-blip bit), stop the tape and press BREAK. Put a blank tape in, and type SAVE "dummy" then press ENTER. Save just the header to tape, and then press BREAK again. Now type MERGE"" and play the dummy header. When the header has loaded, replace the original tape, and play in the remainder of the program (you may have to wait a short while after loading for the MERGE process to complete before the OK message appears).

And to round off, a few words about my setup. I've got a Sinclair 128K, with +D and 3.5" drive, a couple of 48Ks with Interface One/Microdrive systems, a Wafadrive and an 80K Speccy. *(Pardon? Simon)*

I had an issue two Speccy in which I had to replace the 32K memory chips – so I used fully operational 64K chips instead. After replacing the Chip Select link with a switch and doing a CLEAR 32767, it's possible to use all the 64K upper memory. I can have two programs loaded simultaneously, and switch from one to the other! Okay, so you have to pick the programs carefully, but it's a bit of a boon nonetheless.



Bernard Cromarty
Farnworth, Lancs

Thanks for that. (Seething jealousy!) Apparently Bernard is going to continue writing in with tips 'gleaned from years of Speccy owning'. **Si.**

AMSTRAD DMP 2000 CRACKED!

A couple of months ago, somebody wanted to know about dip switches for the Amstrad DMP 2000 printer. Here's all the info you'll ever need. Probably.

There are two sets of switches; DS1 (1-8) and DS2 (1-10). These switches control the various functions of the printer, and they can be in two positions, either ON (down) or OFF (up). So, for example, you can get rid of the annoying beeping when there's no paper in the printer by setting DS2-6 to OFF (up). Here's the table of dip switches and their functions.

SWITCH	FUNCTION	OFF	ON
DS1-1	Int'l xerset	See below	See below
DS1-2	""	""	""
DS1-3	""	""	""
DS1-4	CR	CR only	CR & LF *
DS1-5	Paper out sensor	Enable	Disable
DS1-6	Page length	11 inches	12 inches
DS1-7	ASCII data	8 bit	7 bit **
DS1-8	Default xer set	Normal	NLQ
DS2-1	Zero character	Normal	Slashed
DS2-2	Default skip perf	Disable	Enable
DS2-3	Buffer mode	Xer	Graphics
DS2-4	Buffer mode	Xer/Graph	Download
DS2-5	SLCT IN signal	Not sent	Sent
DS2-6	Alarm bleeper	Disable	Enable
DS2-7	Default typeface	Bold off	Cond & Bold on
DS2-8	Default typeface	Cond off	Bold on
DS2-9	Do not use (switch to off)		
DS2-10	""	""	""

Sort-of glossary: perf=perforation, xer=character, cond=condensed, CR=Carriage return, LF=linefeed.

*If, when you print out, your Speccy prints everything on the same line of the paper, switch this to ON. However, if you get double spaced lines when you print, switch this to OFF.

**For the Speccy, turn this OFF. If you're using an Apple computer *(You wish. Si)* then switch it ON.

Quick guide thang

DS-1,2,3 For the UK character set, DS1-1 should be OFF, as should DS1-2, but DS1-3 should be ON.

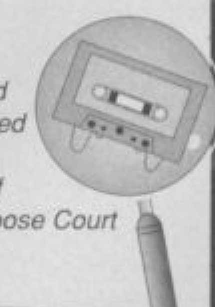
DS1-8 When this is OFF, the printer produces a draft copy of any text sent to it. Another way of switching NLQ on and off is to press "ON LINE" and "LF" at the same time while switching the printer on. *(Going by previous experience, this will probably work while it's switched on as well, as long as the printer is online. Si)*

DS2-3,4 Not too sure about these – on my printer they're both set to OFF.

DS2-5 This should be ON.

And just to give you even more of a headache, Anthony reckons that the correct Speccy settings for the printer should be DS1-3 ON, DS1-6 ON, DS2-1 ON, DS2-5 ON and DS2-6 ON. All others should be off.

Anthony Austin, Simon East and Marcus Dyer



If anyone wants a manual for the printer, try writing to AMSOFT at Brentwood House, 169 Kings Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4EF. They may have moved by now, though. And as a final request in an attempting-to-avoid-writing-to-Input-Output sort of way, Anthony would like to announce that he has a list of games for sale (not just Speccy) so dash a sae to him at: 64 Sheppey Rd, Loose Court Estate, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9SR. **Si.**

COOL IT-I'M ON THE CASE

Mes amis, this was a most baffling case. But Cooquie has been able to solve it most elegantly. You see, the culprit made one fatal mistake. They were the only suspect. Linda Barker, I charge you with being the ex-Editor of Your Sinclair. Oui, mademoiselle – j'accuse! (Twirls moustache.) No, I am not mad. Just slightly affected by the delusion I'm a Victorian villain, which is why I keep twirling my moustache and, incidentally, is also why I've tied you to this railway line. Now, at last, we'll discover why you left YS. (Sound of approaching train.) Har har! (Twirls moustache again.) I'm not one to gloat, but I'd just like to say... aarghh!

(Wakes months later in a hospital bed.) All right – don't laugh. How was I to know that the next train would come along the line I was standing on – not the one I'd tied Linda to? And Poirot's escaped from that cupboard and is threatening legal action. Sigh. Now, if you'll excuse me, it appears to be time for my physiotherapy session. (Crunch) Thaff beffer. Fee you nekf monf. In fuh meantime, here'f Jonafan. *(Folks! While Simon is recovering from his broken bones, why not send him stuff to be getting on with?* (No grapef pleaf – I can't swallow the pipf! Si). *Write to him care of* ***Spec Tec Jr, Ward 11c, Your Sinclair, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW.*** *And remember – tying ex-Editors to railway lines can detrimentally affect your journalistic career. Jonathan)*



PUBLIC HOUSE

The PD scene is a bit quiet at the moment. Every group in the world seems to be beavering away on their 'forthcoming' megademo to the exclusion of all else. So it's up with the shirt-sleeves and time for a quick dip into the alarmingly depleted YS stock of elderly demos.

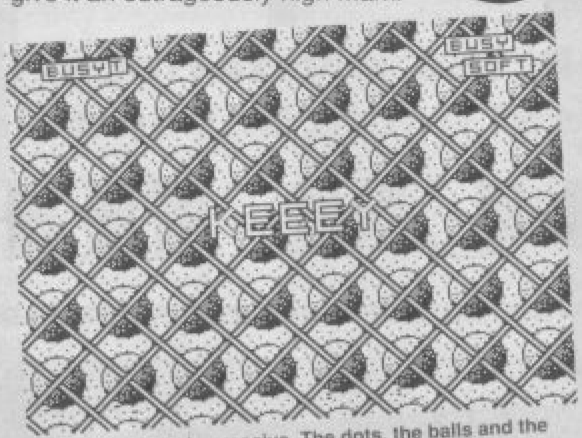
Song in Lines 5 128K
by Busysoft

Remember *Psychedelia*? Well, *Song in Lines 5* is a similar sort of light synthesiser doohickey. The difference this time is that *SIL 5* supplies its own tunes – thirty-seven of 'em to be exact. And rather fab they are too, ranging in style from cover versions of film themes to original and spookily good compositions. Eleven of these songs are from a chap called Voodoo, but the main chunk has been written by Franxoft. (Yes, I know that's not his real nickname, but his real nickname's a bit, erm, dodgy, so I'll stick to Franxoft thankyouverymuch.)

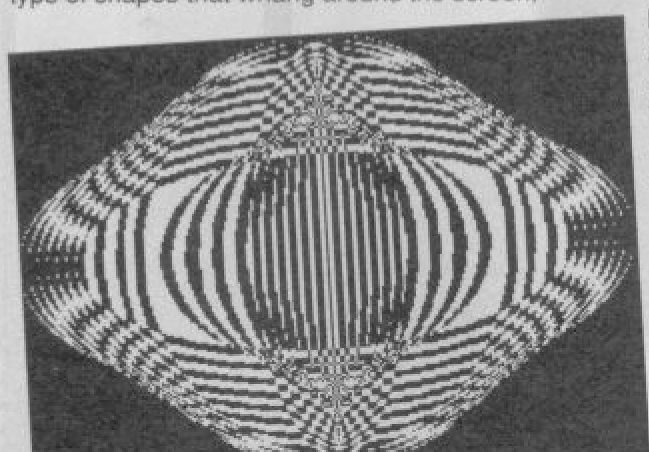
But back to *Song in Lines 5* itself. By prodding a variety of keys you can select the type of shapes that whang around the screen, their colour, and a bunch of obscurely named but extremely natty effects. Very big, very fast filled circles with trails and reflections? Step this way. Enormously huge but dignified vector triangles that squirm about the place like neurotic worms? What luck – we've just had a fresh consignment. Eighteenth century furniture with provenances stating it was written on, slept in, or burned as a political statement by Jane Austen's Latin tutor? Don't be silly, this is a Speccy light synthesiser doohickey. Tch.

Song in Lines 5 is a great deal of fun to play around with. Yer average demo has maybe three or four effects and so has a fairly limited appeal. *SIL 5* has, in a very real and foolishly exaggerated sense, billions and trillions of the blighters and can keep you going for hours just staring at the funky patterns in a vaguely hypnotised sort of way. (Hey! Wooow! Etc etc.) And, yes, the music really is that good. In fact, for sheer entertainment value, I'm going to give it an outrageously high mark.

84%



This bit is madly impressive. The dots, the balls and the wire fence move independently, and the logos spin. Aie!



Hey man! Mellow out! Just look at this lovely flower. Let's sit in a circle and meditate. All together – oooooooommmmmm.

Megademo
by Graf and Dr DF0

No beating about the bush here, eh? What a far more straightforward world it would be if people adopted the sensible attitude of Graf and Dr DF0. 'Look Marjorie – *New Game for the Speccy*. That must be the new game for the Speccy.' 'You're right, Wilberforce. And after you've played it, we could go out to Our Local Cinema and watch A Film.' I'll write and suggest it immediately to my MP.

There's summat a bit odd with *Megademo*. It's got eleven parts, but the finalé is called Part Thirteen. Deucedly strange. Maybe Parts Eleven and Twelve contained military defence secrets, or something. *(Please get on with the review. Please. Andy)* The demo (sorry, megademo) opens in fine style with a neat pic of a spaceship and a scrolly rotating around the Earth in the background. And just to ensure you get a terrible headache through clever interference with your peripheral vision, there's a madly jumping scrolly in the corner. Unfortunately (and this applies to the demo as a whole) the text is in Czech (or Slovak, or Polish, or whatever. Look, I'm sorry, but I'm a bit of a thicky when it comes to Eastern European languages.)

In quick succession there's a big face which blinks at you, an odd bouncing ball flanked by some pulsating stars, a scrolly which whizzes the letters round in a terribly circular fashion and a square full of pulsing colours. So far, so average. Part Six saves the day with a neat vector demo – you can select a line graphic from a set including geometric shapes, +3 disks, spaceships, tables and the like, then rotate it all over the shop to your heart's content. Pretty smart.

After a brief hiccup with a load of scrollies moving at different speeds (like that bit in *NMI 2*, but with fewer messages) there's another neat part. You know all those bouncy bars that appear in time to 128K music? ('Vu-meters' is the techy term, apparently.) Well, *Megademo* has three skulls that sing! Very effective. (Just a pity the tune's a bit crap, that's all.) Part Nine introduces the sine-wave scrolly (so that dates the megademo rather accurately), Part Ten is yer plain old bob demo (aarghh!) and Part Thirteen (see second paragraph) is an art slideshow with some funky digitised pics. (And some crap ones as well, tch.)

Apart from the Vectors bit and the trio of singing skulls, I found *Megademo* to be a dull affair. There's very little to do, and although some unexpected effect turns up occasionally, on the whole, the sections just don't grab the attention.

49%



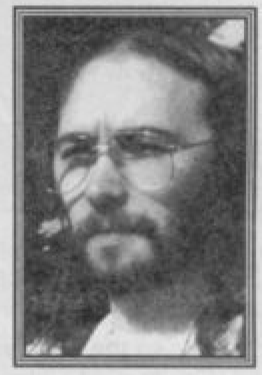
'I am the djinn of the lamp. I can do powerful magic and have mighty strength.' 'So why are you covered in ketchup then?'



By the texture of the background, I'd say the snake is coming out of a table, and any serpent that can bite through wood is a bit scary.

Send a sae to **Rasputin PD, 6 Teanhurst Close, Lower Tean, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs ST10 4NN** or **Prism PD, 13 Rodney Close, Bilton, Rugby CV22 7HJ** for details of what's available. (Exit, stage right, tapdancing incompetently.)

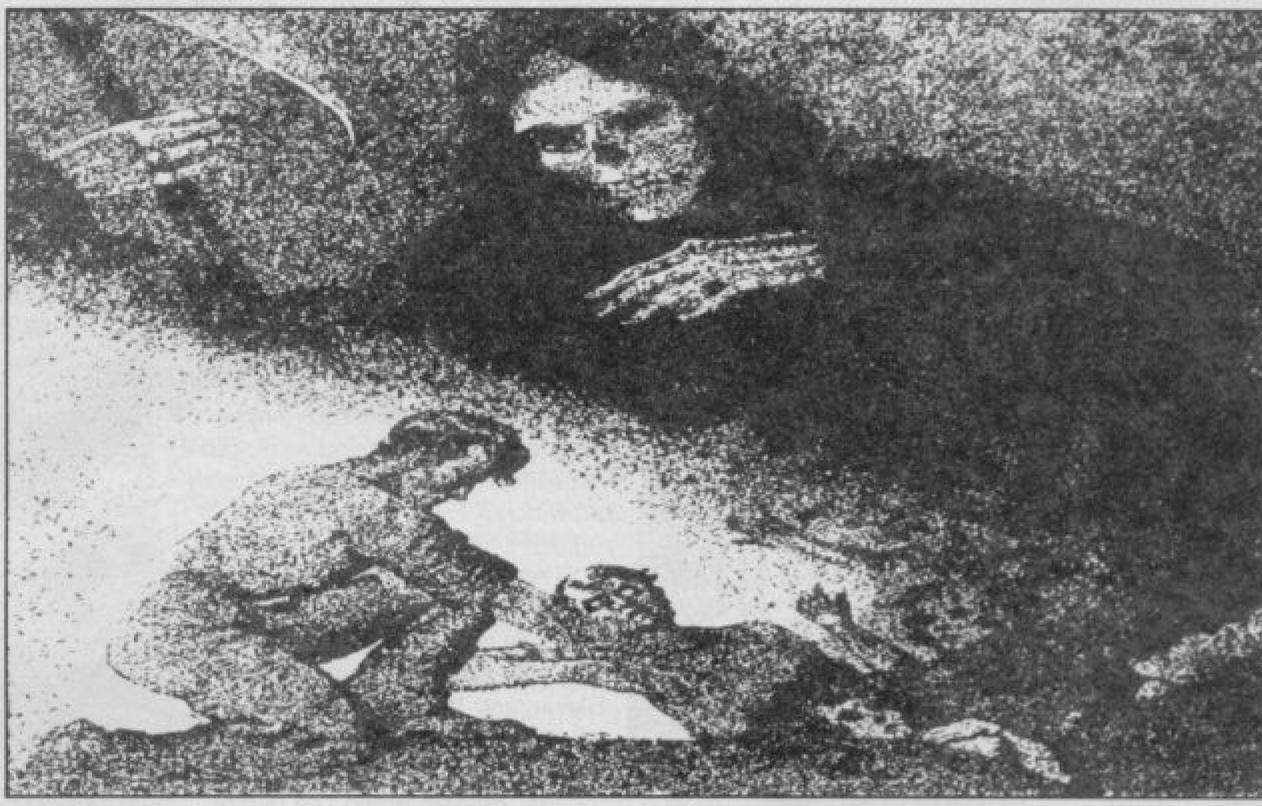
YS ADVENTURES



In which TIM KEMP, the mysterious Traveller In Mauve, takes you to magical lands beyond the veil, and Dundee.

MURDER HE SAID

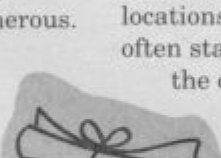
By: Jack Lockerby/Zenobi Software



Murder mysteries always go down quite well with me, and this game had me whipping out my magnifying glass and forensic kit. One whipping-out later and I was scurrying off to Dundee Manor where the heinous crime had been committed. Naturally enough I had my official Angela Lansbury hints 'n' tips book tucked in my back pocket!

The victim was one Philip Stowe who was only at the manor to celebrate his engagement to Emily, the daughter of Major Dundee. There's no mucking about in this game as there's the deadly serious matter of murder to look into, so without so much as an " 'ello, 'ello, 'ello, what have we here then?" you're straight on the case, sniffing around the place for clues and interviewing potential murderers.

Dundee Manor and its grounds are large, and the guests (suspects) are numerous. After interrogating, erm, questioning a few likely-looking people you'll start to get an idea of who was where when the dastardly deed took place, and who might have had a motive for bumping the old boy off. With a bit of careful searching, you'll also begin to collect evidence from the locations you visit. Whodunnits often stand or fall on how well the character interaction is handled, and also on how clever the author has been in hiding the true identity of the murderer from the player. In both cases Jack Lockerby has done well. He's made it easy to grill the suspects without having to resort to an excessive amount of detailed questioning. At the same time he's managed to keep the murderer's (or murderers') identity hidden until the appropriate moment. You won't know for sure until you've amassed all the pieces of damning evidence.



The trouble with detective games is that the reviewer can't say all that much for fear of giving everything away. Needless to say you'll find that not a lot can be taken for granted and that the plot twists one way, and then turns another, to make you doubt your evidence or suspicions. Was Philip Stowe really a drug addict? Did the bullet from the gun really kill him? Was the blood on the carpet even his? You'll never know unless you play *Murder He Said*. It's a 128K-only game and is bound to give you weeks of pleasure (or frustration) until you crack the crime. Oh, and I'd recommend a few repeat watchings of 'Inspector Morse' to get you in the mood!



Title: Murder He Said
From: Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 7NX
Price: £2.49 (128K tape) £3.49 (+3 disk) Overseas customers add 50p (or £1.00 for airmail) to cover post and packing.

TEXT	■■■■■■□□□□
VALUE	■■■■■■■■□□
PERSONAL RATING..	■■■■■■■■■□

NEWS

SECONDHAND SOFTWARE SERVICE

I get quite a lot of letters asking where people can get hold of old adventures. One solution to the 'old titles' problem could lie in the shape of Richard Pascoe. His Secondhand Spectrum Software Service is second to none, and he always has a nice long list of aged classic adventures for sale at reasonable rates. I've had some titles from him myself! So if you are after a bit of nostalgia then Richard's your man. A sae sent to Richard Pascoe, 127 Brampton Road, Newton Farm, Hereford. HR2 7DJ should bring you the current list.

ADVENTURING DOs & DON'Ts



DO EXAMINE interesting objects, then CAREFULLY EXAMINE them, then SEARCH them. (This is called 'triple screening'. You'd be surprised how many objects yield up further goodies when searched rather than just examined.)
DO Collect items (even useless ones) and drop them one by one when tackling a maze. It'll make finding your way through, mapping it, and finding your way back much simpler.



DO EXAMINE BRIDGES and any other likely hazard before attempting to cross.
DO Find out what commands are used to save your current position temporarily to memory. STORE, RAMSAVE or RS usually saves to memory. RECALL, RESTORE, RAMLOAD or RL usually loads back the last stored position.
DO Try to climb every tree you come across in a game.
DO Try to make a rope out of anything remotely rope-like – be it rope-like in length, texture or appearance. Skinned snakes, twisted straw, creepers, vines – they all make good ropes.
DO Always use RAMSAVE before attempting anything tricky or dangerous.
DO Press space (don't press enter) after the screen refreshes (ie after moving from location to location, or after making an input that is acted upon). Doing so will usually fool the Speccy into thinking you're making another input, and thus will pause any real-time elements in the game. This is especially handy when you are being chased by a real-time nasty!
DO Always wear something mauve when adventuring.

DON'T Go into dark places without a source of light.
DON'T Leave your source of light turned on when you are no longer in the dark.
DON'T Eat or drink until told you're feeling hungry or thirsty.
DON'T Give away your precious objects willy-nilly. Try giving trolls, ogres and the like useless objects, or items you've already used. Just because they ask for gold doesn't mean they won't settle for less!
DON'T Attack characters, monsters etc. without first finding a weapon.
DON'T Forget to type HELP at every location if you are stuck. The same goes for typing INFO and VOCAB(ulary).
DON'T Be fooled into going towards strange noises or whispers. It's far better to type LISTEN as usually you'll be told what the noise is, then you can decide whether further investigation is prudent.
DON'T Leave home without your official Timco mauve spleunking cloak. (Only £49.99.)

THE COMPLETE COMPASS HELPLINE (PART ONE)

As well as being a successful and damn smart company, Compass Software have been around longer than most. Time methinks for a helpline special featuring two of the trickier Compass games.

THE BLOOD OF BOGMOLE

One of the most frustrating bits in this YS covergame is when you keep getting caught by the enemy and thrown into the dungeon. There's no limit to the amount of times this can happen, though there are four main ways to escape at first. The rest of the time things get easier. Here's the official POW escape guide...

☛ Before going any further, always get the coin and the bucket (if empty).

☛ First breakout: INVENTORY (to see what you have with you), examine door, examine ogre, get stool (clue), examine hole, examine spider, STORE (to save your position into memory), remove mud, block hole with mud, wait, wait, wait, wait (suffocates spider), unblock hole, examine spider, STORE, pull lever, east, get cloak, wear all, look, get key, get coin, get club, west, west, open door, unlock door, open door, push door, west, give club to ogre, east, south, southeast, south, south, west, west, west, west, west, west.

☛ Second dash for freedom: east (door still open), east, get cloak, get mud, wear all, west, south, southeast.

☛ Third getaway: east, examine door, examine window, stand on stool, examine window, bend bars, examine bars, crawl through window, east, get cloak, get mud, wear all, west, south, south-east.

☛ Fourth jailbreak: STORE, then wait until ogre saves you. If that looks unlikely, RECALL (to get back to the last STOREd position) and try again.

After you've exhausted all of those escape routes, further spells in the dungeon can be brought to a swift end by the use of CALL BERNARD. Bernard (if you didn't already know) is a beaver. Examine the door, east, and you're away on your toes.



INVADERS FROM PLANET X

Undoubtedly one of the best Compass games, what with a great little *Missile Command* arcade section at the end of the game. It also contains a smart interactive strategic map phase where you have to use cunning and logic to locate the aliens and avoid them. Trouble is the start of the adventure is a real tough one, so here are the two main early problems sorted out for you so you can get on and see the rest of the game.

☛ To get the alien bomb: Get pen, south, examine man (tells of bomb), search man, get all, read note (jot down clue), examine panel (note number), examine lever, south, examine body, get suit, move body, get suit, wear suit, examine suit, look, south, southwest, south, examine door, drop all (as the bomb is heavy), press button, south, get orb, kick orb, examine door, examine button, press connections, kick orb, north, get orb, examine orb (the bomb – eek!), northeast, north, north, north, drop orb.

☛ To remove the bomb from the base while avoiding the aliens: Carrying on from the last entry go south, south, south, southwest, examine door, press button (there's an alien on your tail, but to the south lies immense heat, and aliens don't like heat, so...), south, examine body, get mirror, examine connections, press connections, north (alien now gone), get all, northeast, north, north, north, south, examine lever, push lever, north (bomb gone), south, pull lever, south, west, examine man, search man, get string, look, examine button, east, east, east, examine door, kick door, break door, west, south, southeast (the professor calls), south, examine grill, kick grill, unscrew grill, look, get key, get microchip, examine grill, examine key.

There'll be more help for a couple of Compass games next month.

DIAL HARD



There's a whole electronic world out there, waiting for you and your Speccy to get in touch. In this series, SIMON HINDLE will take you by the hand and lead you through the streets of London... no, hang on, into the wonderful world of communications. (That's it.) This month! Just what is all this comms malarkey about, anyway?

If you've ever wanted to play about with the telecommunications systems of the world, this is the page for you. Using an ordinary household Speccy, a modem and a handy phone line, I'll have you making new friends all over the world in no time – or my name isn't Simon Hindle which, according to this politely threatening gas bill, it is.

We'll start at the beginning. For one thing, you needn't worry that the machines you'll be calling aren't Speccies. With modems, everything is standardised. You could use a ZX81 to phone up, and generally boss around, a supercomputer. A Speccy will be more than enough to get you going.

Hang on, you've lost me. What exactly is a modem anyway?

A modem (or to give it its letter-littered name, modulator-demodulator) allows two computers to communicate over a phone line. Basically.

Oh. Right. How?

Data is sent by a modem serially, as opposed to in parallel. As you probably know, a byte is eight bits long. Sending data in parallel involves chucking the whole eight bits along eight wires at once. With serial transmission, you've only got the one wire, so the bits have to be sent one at a time. Guess what? Phone lines are single wires, so we're stuck with serial transmission. (Okay, that's vastly oversimplifying things, but you get the idea.)

So, back to sending data by modem. The data is sent a byte at a time, though in a daring break with historical precedents, these bytes are ten rather than eight bits long. The modem also sends two extra bits, called start and stop bits, to tell the receiving modem where each byte starts and stops. (You'll find they think literally, these modem peeps.)

Let's take an example. When you send the letter 'M' along a modem line, a series of procedures takes place. Firstly, the computer sends the letter to the modem as an eight-bit ASCII digital signal. In other words, it sends a stream of zeroes and ones that make up the code for M in computery language. This code is 01001101. The modem takes the signal and converts it into tones that can be sent down a phone line – similar to the tone you hear when a fax machine answers the phone. There is one tone frequency for ones, and another tone frequency for zeroes. So a one sent along the line might sound like a high pitched squeal, and a zero might sound like a not-so-high pitched squeal.



However, it doesn't stop there. No, no and, er, no! Y'see, not only does a modem send data, it receives the stuff – sometimes at the same time as it sends. (Or 'via synchronous transfer' in an attempt to make the process seem more impressive.) So there have to be two more tones in order to differentiate between the zeroes and ones that are being sent, and those that are being received. In a somewhat half-hearted effort to clarify matters, the former (the sender, or your modem) is called the home or local modem, and the latter (the modem you're calling, or the receiver) is called the distant or remote modem. It helps. Honestly.

So why not send data in parallel?

What, you mean all eight bits at once?

Yup.

Can't be done, old sport. The problem is, your common-or-garden phone line is crap for data transfer – there's a lot of line noise and distortion, and while this is not so bad with just four tones flying around, imagine what it would be like with thirty-two tones, which is what you'd need for parallel transfer! (Eight bits with four tones each... maths, eh?)

Besides, too many people have serial modems to change all the standards. So there.

Okay, okay. What modems can I use with my Speccy then?

What luck! The choice has been made for you already. There's only one available. Way back when (puts on bald wig and hangs pipe from side of mouth) there used to be a super Speccy bulletin board called Micronet. Sadly it keeled over and died, but the 'official' Micronet modem survived and became the standard for Speccy phunsters everywhere. (Phun=fun on the phone. No, really.)

The modem is called the VTX 5000 and it's outrageously cheap at £15 from **BG Services, 64 Roebuck Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1JX**. The phone number's 081 397 0763. In fact, if you mention YS when you order your VTX, you can have it for a tenner. Blimey. But! I have to warn you that the modem won't work on a +2A or +3 without a doohickey called 'The Fixit' (£9.50, also from BG) and, sadly, it won't work on the original Sinclair black-with-funky-radiator-bolted-to-the-side 128K at all. I'll bet you want to know about binary next.

Er, yes, that would be nice.

When the men in white coats invented computers, they had the devilish boxes think in binary. This is a number system that has only two components – one and zero – because an electric current can be only on or off. See?

Counting in binary is dead easy. For computers. Actually, it's not too tricky for human beans either. Remember 01001101? Let's turn it back into the letter M. The trick is to imagine a row of eight numbers increasing in powers of two. This gives us:

2^7	or	128
2^6	or	64
2^5	or	32
2^4	or	16
2^3	or	8
2^2	or	4
2^1	or	2
2^0	or	1

Now, write the binary alongside and add up all the decimal numbers with ones by them.

128	0
64	1
32	0
16	0
8	1
4	1
2	0
1	1=64+8+4+1=77

Finally, PRINT CHR$ 77 and, lo and behold, the letter M! (Good old men in white coats.)

Thank you very much.

You're welcome.

Well, that's about covered the basics. Next month – how to change satellite trajectories and access American military mainframes. Ha ha! Only joking. We'll actually be plugging in the modem and calling some bulletin boards. Be seeing you (as they say).

THE OFFICIAL FATHER CHRISTMAS



Alternative/£3.99
☎ 0977 797777

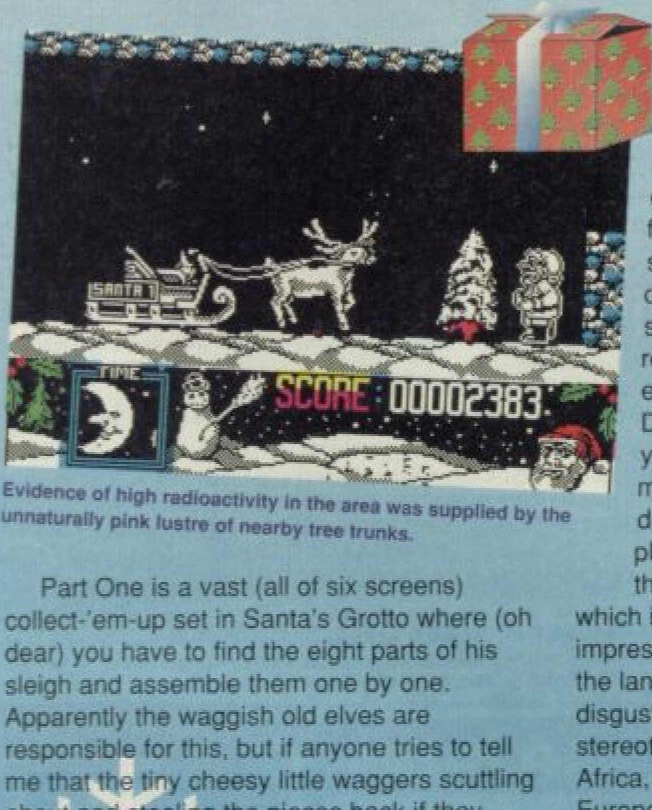


I've always thought that Santa and Mario have a lot in common. They both have stupid rosy cheeks, ludicrous facial hair and dress sense only marginally more respectable than that of Kris Kross, and yet they're both sickeningly popular. Makes you think, dunnit? *(No. Get on with it. Thousands of disillusioned readers.)* Ah well.

Anyway, this particular little japester escaped the clutches of the YS Jugglers in (spook) Christmas 1989, so here I am reviewing it, or, more properly, staring listlessly at it and wondering vaguely what to say. Um, right, it's a three-parter. Here they are in turn.

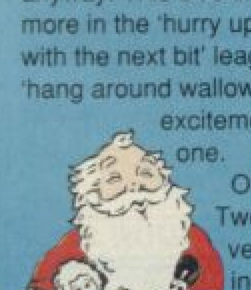


It's really of little consequence why Santa should be fixing plastic explosive to the chimney when that snowman is apparently firing a flamethrower into the air.



Evidence of high radioactivity in the area was supplied by the unnaturally pink lustre of nearby tree trunks.

Part One is a vast (all of six screens) collect-'em-up set in Santa's Grotto where (oh dear) you have to find the eight parts of his sleigh and assemble them one by one. Apparently the waggish old elves are responsible for this, but if anyone tries to tell me that the tiny cheesy little waggers scuttling about and stealing the pieces back if they touch you are elves, I shall flare my nostrils dangerously, call down some moderately dreadful curses and brandish a dog-eared copy of Lord Of The Rings under the nose of the insolent fool, so I will. *(Blimey, calm down Leigh. Ed)* But anyway. This bit's okay, but more in the 'hurry up and get on with the next bit' league than the 'hang around wallowing in the excitement of it all' one.



On to Part Two, which is very crap indeed and I don't really want to talk about it. Er, er, okay then. It's about as space-fillery as space-fillers realistically get, and it involves you, as Santa of course, choosing presents to go on someone's Christmas list (presumably as opposed to giving them what they asked for, you cold-hearted swine) then collecting them as they fall from the air. A clever tactic here is the 'stand still and wait until all the toys you need have fallen on you' – it's *that* difficult. Sigh. Life's so depressing at times. But enough philosophy, as I believe JD once said.

Right, Part Three, which I suppose is meant to be the main part of it all as it involves actually delivering the prezzies all over the world (four continents with, er, six presents each... funky mathematics and no mistake). No sprite animation, no variety, a feeling of cheapness and a suspicious visual similarity to *Santa's Xmas Caper* don't really add to this bit, but it does have the ever so spooky Adhesive Clouds From Dimension Plib that sweep off your falling prezzies in a manner which can only be described as 'erk'. The planes and birds knock the gifts off-target too, which is ever so impressive of them. And the landscapes are disgustingly stereotyped (mud huts in Africa, terraced houses in Europe etc). Yea verily! 'Tis a bit on the crap side.

THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

Well, then, the summing-uppy bit draws in and thus I must sum up. *The Official Father Christmas*, eh? It's not great, let's face it. It's monstrously easy, the only way you can 'die' (tedium notwithstanding) being via the feeble time 'limit', so it should take you, phoo, one game to complete. Sound's minimal, graphics on average are, er, very average, but it just ain't fun. And why's it 'Official'? Did they track down Santa and get his TM? (Snort.) Je ne pense pas (or whatever). It's by Enigma Variations too, who really should know better (firmly slapped wrists) and just because it's for a good cause (Save the Children) doesn't mean they can just fling out any old pile of Les Dennis (arf). Well, that's it from me, but before I nick off I'd just like to bellow rousing hellos in the general direction of The Mildly Extraordinary Flat 155 and its denizens, and also to Cara, Sally, Signe and all me other MUD mates, for no other reason than I know it will irritate Jonathan, ho ho. Gosh, I'm a rogue.



Santa: the war hero. Here he drops 4000lb bombs with devastating accuracy. Pity it's on New Jersey, but there you go.

FINAL VERDICT



Er, it's all for charity.



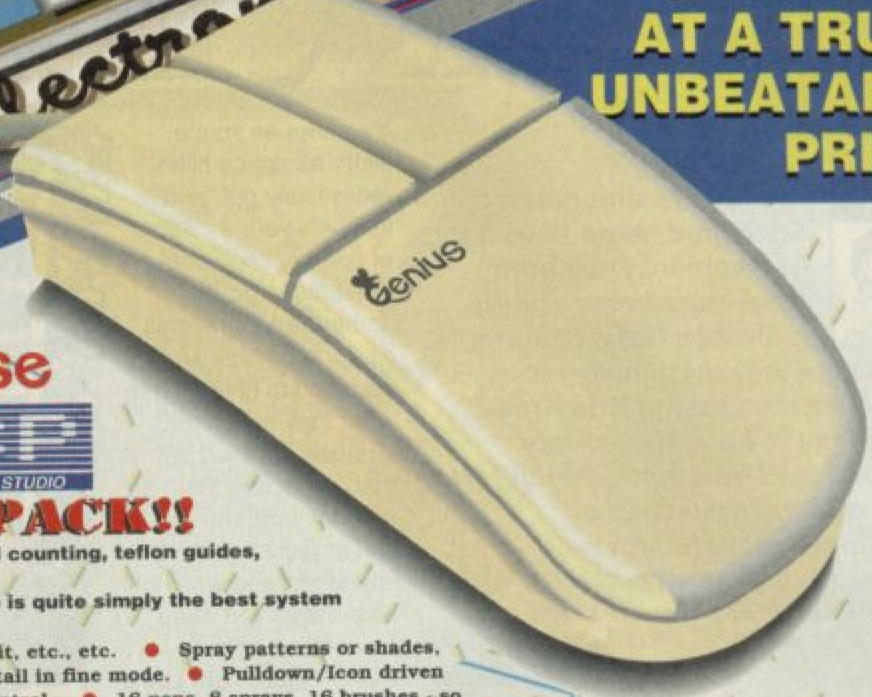
Two of the three games are depressingly crap. The third's not too good either.

If I were the official Santa, I'd sue. Basically.

43%

REVIEWS

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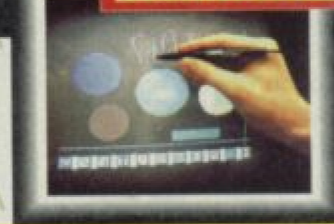
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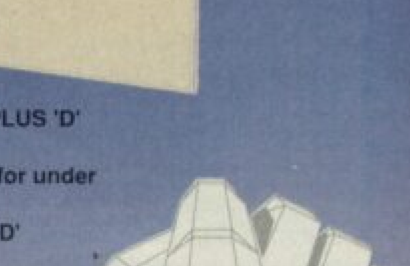
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REPLAY

What can you say about the galaxy's least crumpety re-release column? Apart from, 'It's just about to start', of course.

Sergeant Seymour

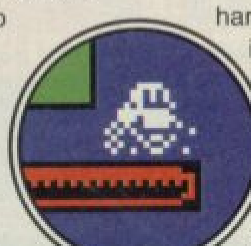
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Look out – it's a Codies plot! Lardy (but getting leaner by the minute) Seymour stars in his latest block-buster movie – Robotcop. He's waddled here to protect the innocent, hit the not-so-innocent, and lock up the downright nasty. Just a pity he's wearing a bobble-hat to do it in. (Nobody can tell me that thing's a police helmet.) An almost fatal accident nearly forced the world's most famous Dizzy lookalike into early retirement. But we have the technology to rebuild him! (As they say.) Thanks to the miracles of modern surgery, bionic engineering and advances in crocheted bobble-hattery he's back on the streets, leaving large cracked paving stones in his wake. It's sort of the Six Million Dollar Man-Made-Out-Of-Lard, Lee-Majors-as-a-blob, really.



Jonathan gave this little corker 90% when it popped up as part of the *Super Seymour* compilation, and I have to say I agree with him on the question of its spankiness, though, of course, in an entirely non-crawly fashion. The basic idea of the game is to smash the thuddishly squishy bad guys against the walls using your sproingy bionic arm. That is, if you can find where you are when you start the screen. This takes a fair few minutes because you cleverly hide yourself in the background before each level comes up. Sort of like hide-and-seek really, but more pointless. Anyway, after this heavy-handed (ho ho) treatment from the long arm (ho ho again) of the law, the miscreants disappear into the firmament and leave behind a power-up to collect – one of either the fruit or weapon variety. These bolt-on boxes include short-range laser guns, *R-Type*-ish blasters that you charge by holding down fire and the like, while the fruit, er, gives you points.



Other bonuses are a brand new flashy bobble-hat which allows you to survive one bust-up, a handy-dandy coin that gives invulnerability for a short time, and a rainbow icon which speeds up both Seymour and his telescopic appendage (oo-er). *(Blimey, it's been a while since we had one of those. Ed) (Oo-er. Thousands of YS readers).* There's also a telephone on which to call the SWAT team, but it didn't do anything whenever I picked it up. *(That's because you have to wait until it rings, you clot. Ed)* Sometimes, instead of goodies, letters are left behind. If all of these are picked up, a special bonus stage with goodies aplenty is for the taking – but I'll be darned if I can get all of the letters, no matter how hard I try. (Gnash.)

In fact, a big 'gnash' all round for *Sergeant Seymour*. Well, to start with, at least. Picture the happy Spec-chum, a-sitting down to play. Fifteen minutes of getting killed on Level One later and they're carving lard effigies of Seymour and meaningfully pounding them flat with hammers. 'It's oh-so-incredibly hard at first' is a phrase I'd use if I hadn't done so already. Three lives are not enough! (Especially with multiple-hit baddies, and gun-toting outlaws that pretend to be stunned when they're not, scampering around.)

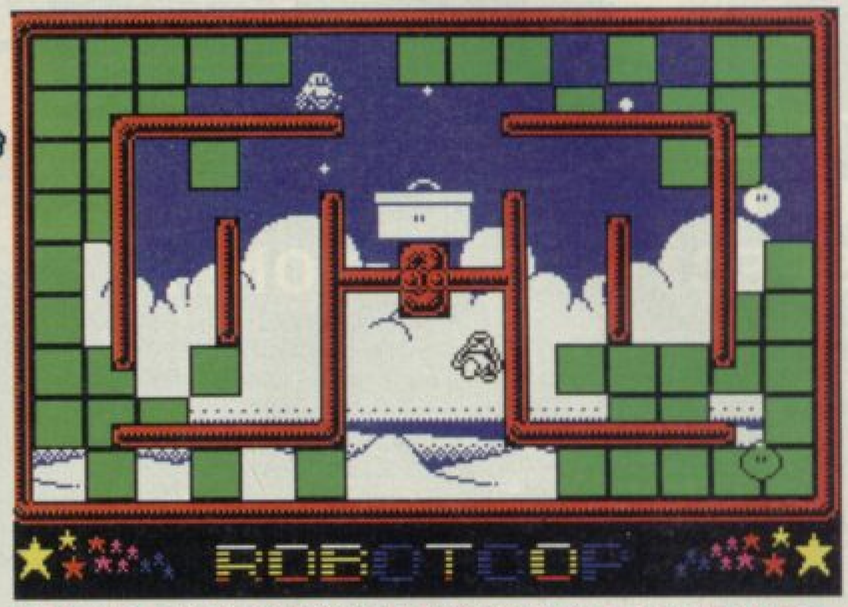


Thank heavens the programmers of *Sergeant* have used the special added ingredient of new "Addicto" (the unique bluey-whiteness addiction factor). Once the initial screams have died down, you find yourself persevering to get that bit further each time. And that's what counts, isn't it, readers?

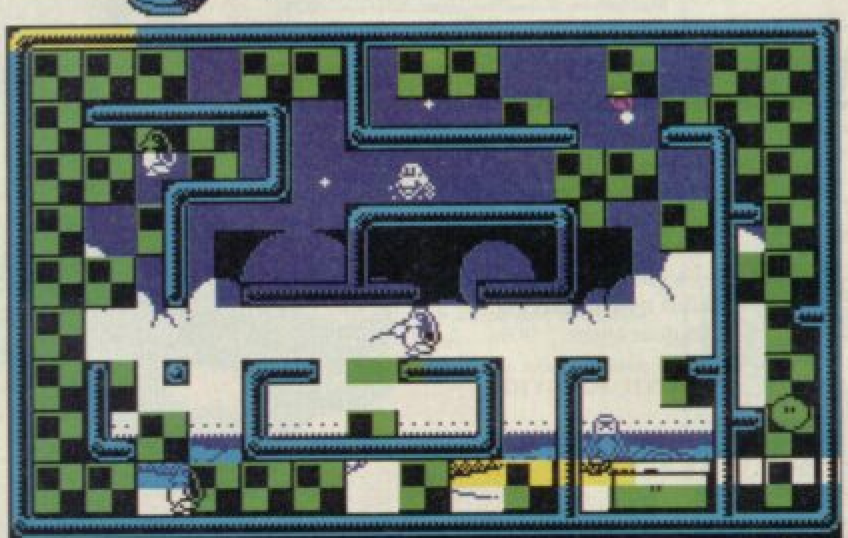
Simon



81%



Riddle-me-ree, riddle-me-roo, riddle-me-this, riddle-me-do. Why is a raven like a writing desk? *(Neither of them are sheep! Andy) (Er, Fred Harris! Jonathan)* No. I win!



It's the grin that gets me. Maybe Seymour is secretly a member of a synchronised swimming team. Or perhaps there's something stuck in his mouth. Or, he's happy. (Erk.)



Time for a bit of free-form comedy, I think. Tea, tea, tea, sponk, purple. Hmmm, not very 'free'. *(Or 'funny'. Andy)*

Compilation

4-Most Thrillers

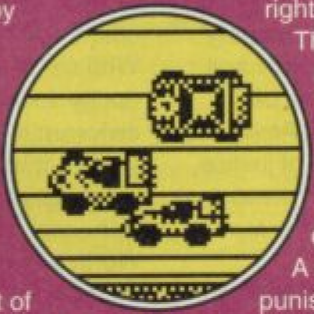
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Hello! I'm on loan from Amstrad Action and I'd like to talk to you about my fanzine, Artificial Intelligence. It's witty, informed, nicely orange and... what? Oh, how damned inconvenient. I'm afraid I'll have to break off here in order to write the review.

The Fury

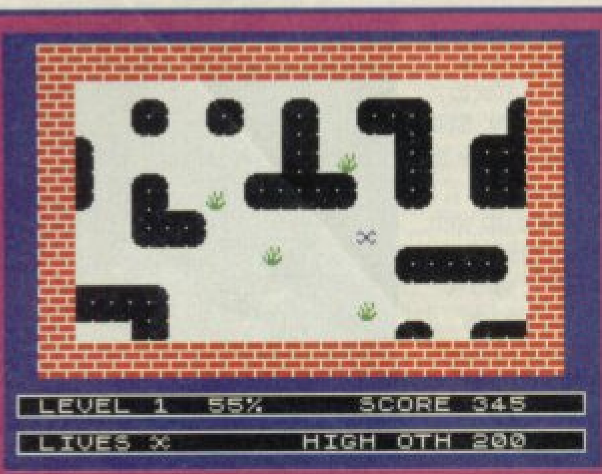
Picture, if you will, a racing track in deep space. Then imagine a sort of Formula One Grand Prix Nige-Mansell-goes-berserk-with-heavy-machine-guns-gratuitous-leaden-death sub-plot. That's *The Fury* in a nutshell.

The idea behind the game is to drive around as fast and as violently as possible, with extra points gained by killing other drivers. With the points converted to hard cash, you can buy loads of death-dealing add-ons for your car, or even a new (and, naturally, more dangerous) set of wheels altogether. The absurdly long set of instructions also mentions the Fury itself, which is a sort of alternative dimension you enter by driving much too fast for your own good. Or something.



Driving games have always suffered from irritatingly smug Speccy opponents who cut you up on the first corner, so playing one where you can instantly retaliate by launching a couple of missiles was a lot of fun. Fast, extremely detailed graphics fill the screen with maniac contestants and scorching explosions, and atmospheric extras like the judges' roving gunsight that homes in on you if you drive too safely add to the Mad Max-y feeling. I liked it. Basically.

83%



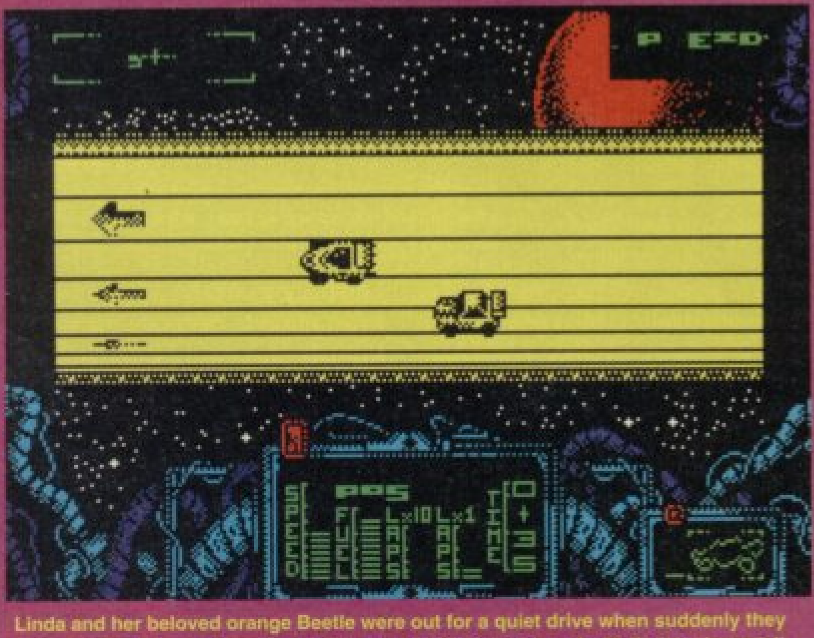
And now! A special guest caption from Tim Blackbond himself. Take it away, Tim! Don't be shy. Remember, just be yourself. Act natural. Say something funny. Go on, you can do it. 'Er...'

Splat

Ho hum. How can this game be explained? There's a maze, right, and it moves around. Then there's you, a spider-like monster with a keen interest in stuffing his face. If you so much as touch the outer walls of the maze, you'll die. A trifle harsh punishment but a fitting one as I'm sure you'll agree.

On top of trying to avoid being pushed into the walls, there is also water to avoid (swimming was something this species could never grasp) and small clusters of drawing pins. Ouch! *(Dangerous occupation, reviewing. Ed)* That's all there is to it. The graphics are basic as, er, BASIC and by reading the previous bunch of words you'd think the game was deeply, deeply shallow. But by reading the following bunch of words you'd change your opinion. *Splat* is so addictive you'll need to buy it on prescription. That randomly-moving maze really does get the old heart palpitating, and the vastly horrible range of obstacles added with every new level is something to behold in wonder. Okay, you'll probably be too busy shouting and telling everybody that passes how unfair the game is and you'll never play it again and all Speccy games are crap, and so are Speccies come to think of it, in fact Sir Clive Sinclair is the spawn of the devil and excuse me while I have another go to regard them with wonder, but you get the idea.

79%



Linda and her beloved orange Beetle were out for a quiet drive when suddenly they were sucked into another dimension and forced to race in a death derby. 'Jeepers!' remarked Linda later. 'It was lucky I'd packed some sandwiches.' (Film at eleven.)

Mega-Apocalypse

As with every compilation, there has to be a turkey of the bunch. A fundamental rule of the universe,



The lozenge of death floated lazily through the eternal void, in a vaguely poetic sort of way. Suddenly he was set upon by two cheese puffs and never seen again.

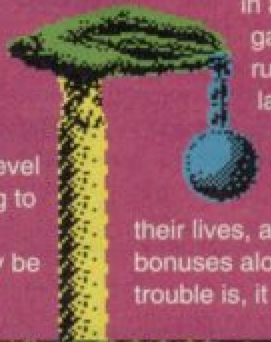
or something. Anyway, here it is! *Mega-Apocalypse* is little more than a less-advanced version of *Asteroids*. The idea of the game is to go boldly where no person has ever gone before, seek out new planets and blow the living daylights out of them. And there you have it, guide your pyramid-shaped craft through the same level over and over and over again. In fact the ultimate goal is to stay awake.



23%

Vixen

Platform-scantily-clad-ex-Benny Hill-model-whiparama! Basically. Oh, all right. The world's been taken over by dinosaurs, and as the last hume (Corinne Russell, no less) your task is to defeat the monsters, save the planet, blah blah, yakity shmakity, and so on in a similar vein. In game terms you run along a landscape, whipping beasties to within an inch of their lives, and collecting bonuses along the route. The trouble is, it can be just a tad





Yetta the octopus was having a fine old time. Contrary to the sceptical musings of Bob and Patricia, she had succeeded in disguising herself as a lot of leaves.

easy. I mean, the beasties either come from the left or right (none of this attack from above business) and all the supposedly tricky leaps over gaping chasms can be timed with the greatest of ease. It's fun for a short while, but the novelty will wear off given time, mark my words, me laddo.

61%

4-Most Thrillers, eh? (Ha! No problem, this lingo.) It's a strange collection of titles, none of which can be really classed as thrillers. For example, there's little mention of Michael Jackson and no surprise twist endings at all. Oh, and two of the games are not at all thrilling either. If you've already got *The Fury*, this is worth a look for the mind-thrashingly rare *Splat*. (Oh blimey, six lines short.) Now, about my fanzine. *(No. Ed)* Er, and now in Your Sinclair, a selection of edited highlights from Tim Blackbond's *4-Most Thrillers* review. *(Go away. Ed)* **Tim**



65%

Space Gun

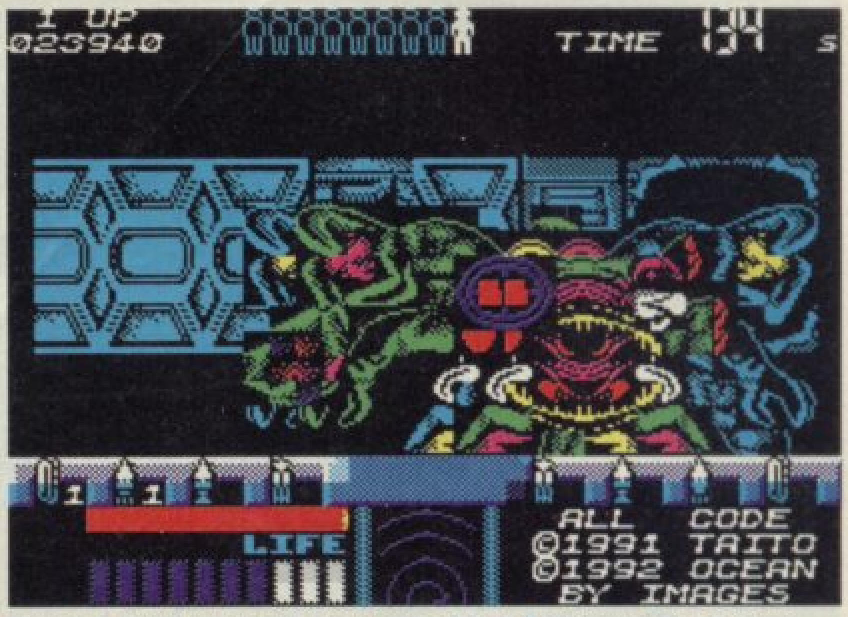
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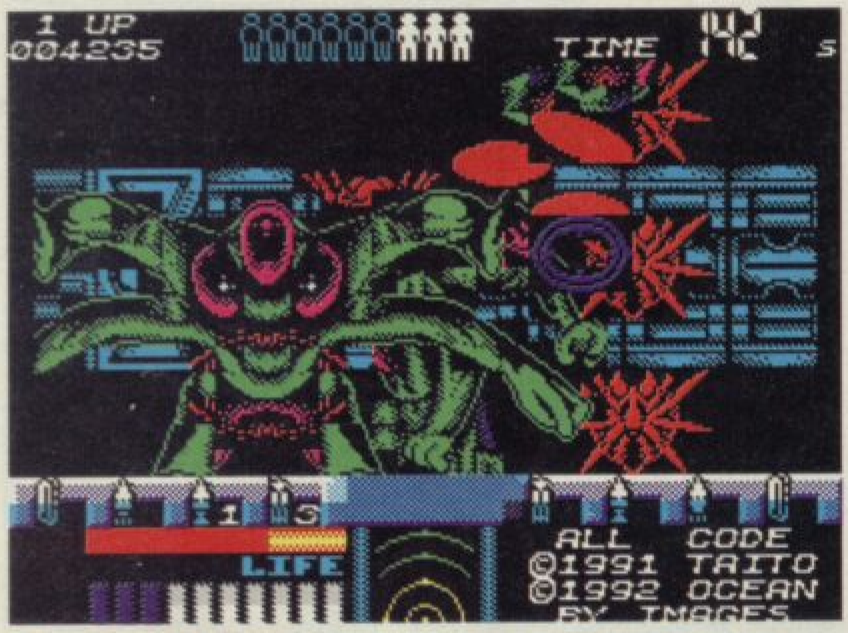
'Hello, I'm a concerned citizen, and I'd just like to tell you about this review. It's an eighteen certificate review, you see, as it's full of disturbingly violent descriptions of an excessively vicious game. You might actually want to go out and pick some flowers rather than expose yourself to...' Oh, get out of the way, you tedious small-minded individual. *Space Gun* is the unofficial (hem hem) game of the film Aliens, with you tramping through a network of tunnels completely overrun with alien scum, blasting them and rescuing a group of colonists. The story's told in some nice between-level graphics - just a pity you have to load them in separately. Still, gives you plenty of time to get ready. (Sound of someone arming up with several clanky guns.)

Picture this... you're walking down a corridor, and these things come down from the ceiling. I thought they were like those splotches on Patrick Moore's face 'til they shot at me. *(Eh? Ed)* Amble a little further, and these doors open. Oo-er, that's ominous. (Sound of bolt being drawn back on ludicrously big gun.)

All of a sudden, the screen fills with aliens. Lots of 'em. So you shoot them, but they don't die. Bits fly off instead. Arms and legs go spiralling away but they don't care. The aliens keep on coming, so you keep on blasting until they fall down dead. Hahahahaha! Die, non-human life-forms! Dakkadakkadakka! Pow! Powpowpow! Ha, got 'em. (Pant pant.) Then these face-huggery things jump onto your visor and you have to scorch them off. Fwoosh! Hahahahaha! Perish in the all-cleansing flame of justice, diseased interplanetary creatures! *(I think he's getting a little too involved here. Ed)*



And this is Joseph, our quantity surveying friend from Walthamstow. We met Joseph while camping in Spain. You remember, darling, he was the man who stole our tent. You shot him. How we all laughed later over tea!



'The world would be a quieter place/Without the devious human race/Committed to eternal chase/They never let us be./I feel the human race should be/Consigned to books of history/It really is quite plain to see/They simply have no place.' 'So we eats 'em.'

And then things start getting silly. Aliens pour out of the walls. You shoot off their arms so they can't claw you. There are bits of bodies all over the shop. Colonists run around in a panic. Bullets fly everywhere. Your view is totally obscured. You're firing blind, switching between guns, grenades and flame-throwers. The end-of-level guardian pops up. You blaze away.



Another level loads, and you start all over again. And it's a stomach-churningly large amount of fun. Who cares about colour clash, dodgy sound effects or an awkward multiloader when the game's this much (there's that word again) fun? I enjoyed every dishonest, unclean minute of it. Worth four pounds of any slightly unbalanced Vietnam veteran's money. (Twitch twitch, polish gun.)

Simon Forrester



87%

Super Space Invaders

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When you come to think about it, assuming an alien invasion would be directed against us is egotism of the highest order. Take the *Super Space Invaders*, for example. Swooping down in their shiny death-ships, completely ignoring the people (despite the vociferous protestations of several all-party committees) and making off instead with cows. Ha! That's taught us a valuable lesson in humility. Still, doesn't stop us from blasting 'em to bits with a couple of big guns.

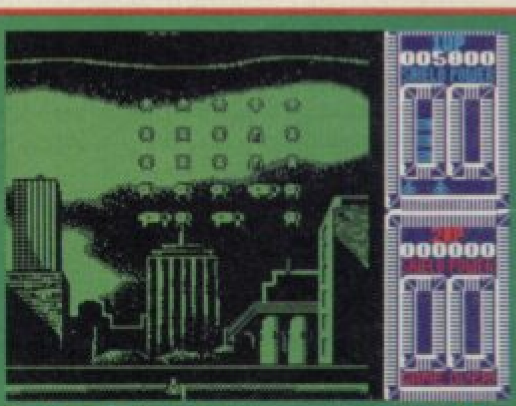


It's funny, but contrary to all expectations, this game works. I was convinced that taking the basic idea and chucking loads of extra features on top would swamp the gameplay, but, er, it hasn't. I can't think of one weak link in the design. There's a two-player mode, a feast of power-ups (that drop from the saucers, but – hurrah! – stay on the ground until you collect them rather than disappearing like those in *Arkanoid*), a bit of silliness (those cow kidnap levels) and some seriously groovy attack patterns. If you look closely you can spot bits of *Xevious* (scrolling backgrounds), *Galaxians* (dive-bombing aliens), *Gorf* (circular attack waves) and loads of other nostalgia-inducing arcade games. (My fave bit is Wave Two, where the aliens all drop like stones only to bounce back up the screen just before you fall off your chair).



And here's Aunt Squeegee hiking up the side of Mount Big. There's a funny story attached to this. It seems Aunty forgot to take her warm climbing gear and died.

So much for the design. The implementation leaves something to be desired. Speed, for one thing; the game plays like rolling a rock down a hill of treacle.



Spot the graphic competition, number fourteen. Sit in your normal gameplaying chair, look at this screen and try to find the sprites. (Answer next month.)

Legibility would be another asset. In an effort to distance the game from its oh-so-simple ancestor, the coders have put in over-detailed backgrounds. Devoted accuracy to the coin-op has muddled the playability.

Jonathan



62%

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84 DEC ONo YS84
On the tape – complete game of *The Light Corridor*. Plus! *Bored of the Rings Part One*, and playable demo of *Sergeant Seymour*. Inside there's a *Crystal Kingdom Dizzy* review and the first part of Steve's Programming Launderette.



85 Jan ONo YS85
With *Guardian 2*, the *ZIP BASIC Compiler*, *Shock* megademo and *Bored of the Rings Part Two* all on the tape. And! A free tape head cleaner. Inside: the Beyond Belief story and *Football Manager 3* reviewed.



86 Feb ONo YS86
Fun-filled tape includes the incredibly smart *Turbulence*, the final part of *Bored of the Rings* and a reader game called *Hexcellent*. Ace, eh? Inside there's a round-up of the year and *Robin Hood: Legend Quest* gets the once-over.



87 March ONo YS87
What a tape! It's got *Rebelstar*, *Soldier One* and *The Pathetic Pablo Bros*. Plus! A demo and a couple of utilities. Like, wow man! Inside you'll find *Nigel Mansell's World Championship* and *Street Fighter 2*. A fruity pear of an issue!



88 April ONo YS88
Kill your friends! (Not literally.) Two-player *Rebelstar* is on the tape (along with a load of other stuff) while *DJ Puff* and new machine code column Ooh, Sourcey! brighten up the mag. There's also a Sylvester McCoy interview. Bwah!

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GIMME GIMME GIMME!

MAG*SAVE

Are you tired? Depressed? Having trouble getting hold of YS? Well, don't worry cos the cure for all these ills is here. Yes! It's the all-new panacea for a lost generation! All you have to do is fill in the coupon, hand it over to your newsagent and your garden will bloom again, your CD player will work perfectly and, best of all, you're guaranteed a copy of Your Sinclair every month!

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CROSSWORD CLUES! Er, basically.

ACROSS
1. You light 'em and this one's black. (4)
4. Just the type to go on a Quest. (4)
5. Tronix's 'backwards bee' game (oh dear). (3)
6. Old, critically-slammed bullfighting game. (4)
8. The people who brought us *Barbarian*. (The head choppy-off one, not the other one). (6)
10. Loose *Darius* arcade sequel. *(Loose? Ed)* (6)

DOWN
2. One of those *(Whoops! Ed)* Bonanza Bros. (4)
3. An ancient heroic black blob with legs. (6)
4. Default weapon in *Heartland*. (3)
5. Currency of *Forgotten Worlds*. (5)
7. *Asteroids* with bubbles and blokes. (4)
9. Dinamic's all-graphics-no-gameplay scroller, written, er, backwards so that it fits in. (1,1,1)

Another Leigh Loveday special, there. Send your answers to YS May Crossword, YS, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. The winner gets some YS goodies of a probably T-shirty nature.

Speccy Owners' Secret Society! Identify yourself to other Speccy owners by means of this cunning password: 'Zucchini.' If they answer, 'No thanks, I'm trying to give them up,' then you know you're in good company.

KILLER KOLUMN FROM OUTER SPACE!

Everybody Needs Good Neighbours
Joining John Goodman as Fred in the up-coming **Flintstones** movie are Tracey Ullman as Betty and Rick Moranis as Barney. Jim Henson's Creature Shop are creating a full-sized Dino for the film. Just pray that Macaulay Culkin doesn't end up as Bam Bam.



Hanna-Barbera's lyrics are notorious. 'Flintstones / Meet the Flintstones / They're the modern stone-age family' – have you ever heard anything so ridiculous? Pah.

Who Specials Update
The radio show starring **Jon Pertwee** is definitely going ahead, though the series may not now be broadcast until early 1994, and it seems likely to be only five thirty-minute episodes long. Meanwhile, The Sunday Mirror reported recently that the new controller of BBC1, Alan Yentob, has revealed plans for a one-hour special starring either Sylvester McCoy or Tom Baker. We shall see.

Suburban Aliens
America's cult TV comedy Saturday Night Live has already spawned one movie spin-off in Wayne's World, and now there's another on the way. **The Coneheads** is about a family of aliens living in suburbia. Which doesn't sound anything like Meet The Applegates at all, does it?

Spock the Difference
Leonard Not-Spock Nimoy is planning a Tron-style TV programme called **Deadly Games**, with a cast of video characters that come to



Video killed the radio star (apparently). What nonsense. Jon Pertwee is both a video and radio star, and he's in the peak of condition. He can run at twenty-five mph. It's true.

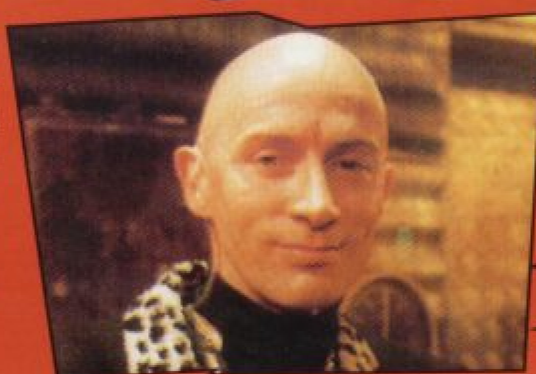
life. Which isn't much different to a series of films he's been involved with in which a cast of stiffs keep coming back to life.

Vids
Finally out at the beginning of April are the 'director's cut' of **Doctor Who: Silver Nemesis** (ie, the one that contains the plot) and a recoloured **Doctor Who: Terror of the Autons**. The first episode of **Deep Space Nine** is due in June (though this is subject to change). The pilot episodes of **Time Trax**, the new US series I mentioned last month, and the **Highlander** TV series are now available on vid to rent.

It's a Miracle
If you've been unfortunate enough to catch an Aussie effort called **The Miraculous Mellops** (a garish SF comedy which features Neighbours-style kids acting out a script which has all the wit of a Rentaghost episode) will be stunned to learn that it's been an international hit. A second series is underway with a budget of £70,000 per show.
Dave Golder

TEXT ADVENTURE

Talking of the irritating brat, he's set to star in **Pagemaster**, which, like Roger Rabbit and Cool World, mixes animation and real-life actors (so where does Mac fit into this scheme?). He plays a sprog who's hit on the head by a book and ends up in a fantasy land populated by Hanna-Barbera-created characters. Meanwhile Richard O'Crystal Maze Brien has made a TV series called **The Ink Thief** which also combines live action and animation. The thirteen-part series is due to start in April.



D'you know, Richard always appears on TV nude. He's so thin, he just paints his clothes on. It's true.



NEXT MONTH!

In the world's most top-hole Spec mag

- Our jolly old **Beaut Box** groans under the weight of games, utilities, demos and POKEs.
- The Jugglers brush up on their Latin in readiness for tackling **reviews**, **previews** (well, possibly) and a fair old amount of **Replay**!
- Here they come to save the day! The **+3 Musketeers** gallop through the quad to vanquish your +3 problems!
- Plus! The Shed Crew split a few pen nibs packing in all the regular features! **Tipshop** will be donning gloves in the gym, **Ooh, Sourcey!** will be writing fairly rude things on the blackboards, **Adventures** will be making apple-pie beds in the dorm and **Spec Tec Jr** will be thrashing the Remove at cricket if he can finish his lines in time! And (you never know) there might even be a few new bugs in the form!



YOUR SINCLAIR – it's scrummier than a jumbo hamper of tuck!